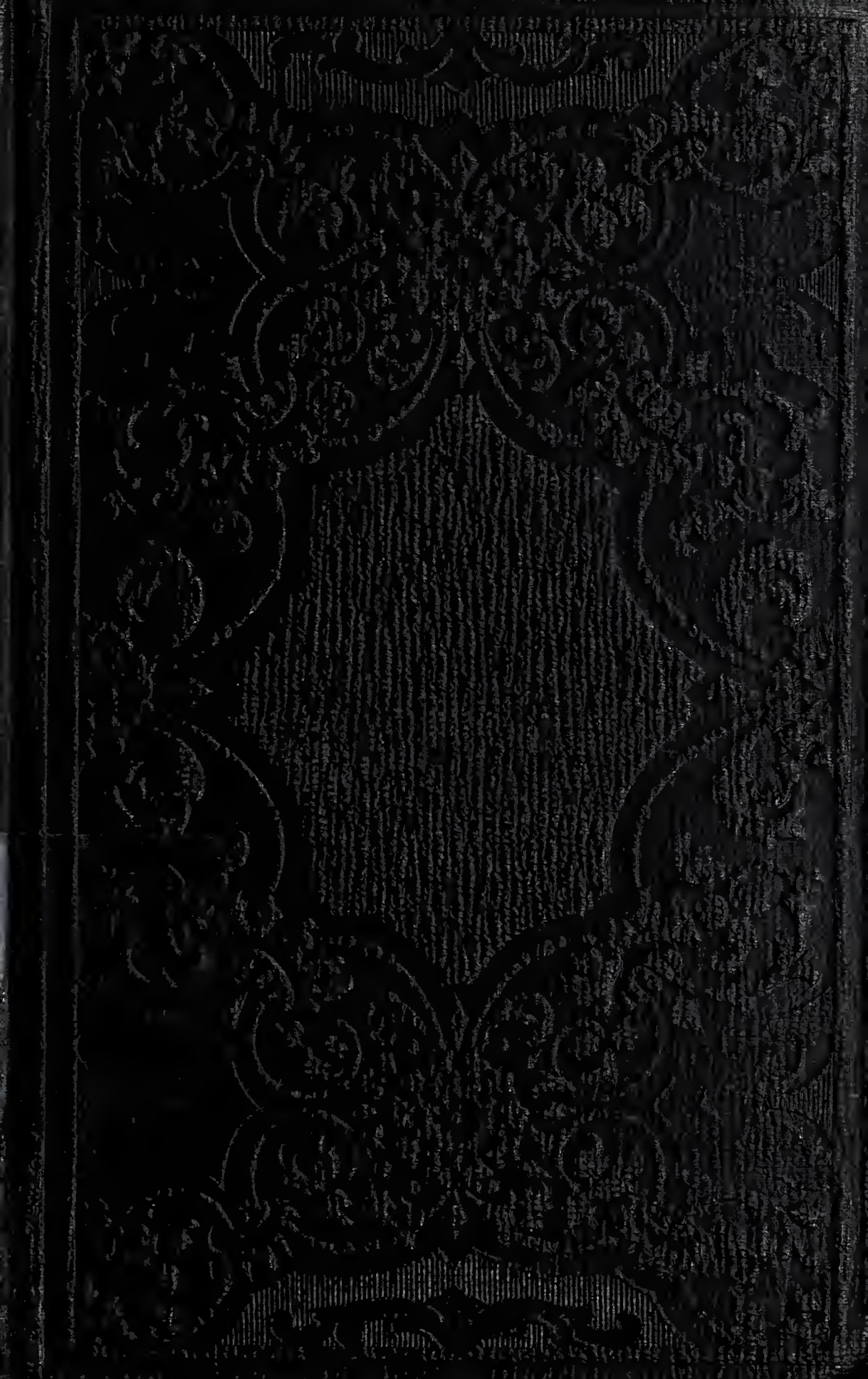

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THE

NATURE, EFFECTS,

AND

PARDON OF SIN;

TO WHICH

IS ADDED A WARNING AND EXHORTATION TO SINNERS.

BY

REV. JNO. W. HARSHA, A.M.
PROF. IN WESTMINSTER COLLEGE, PA.

"O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great."—*Ps.* xxv. 11.
"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."—*Isa.* xliii, 25.

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TO

DAVID A. HARSHA,

HIS BELOVED BROTHER,

Author of "Thoughts on the Love of Christ;" "Christ, and Him crucified;" "Immanuel's Land," &c.

AND TO HIS

Christian Friends and Fellow-Sinners,

THIS LITTLE VOLUME

Is affectionately Inscribed by the

AUTHOR.

INTRODUCTION.

Being disabled by laryngeal affection from addressing persons orally, we resort to the press, which, though it wants the eloquence of the living speaker, is more extensive in its influence and lasting in its duration. As far as observation and experience extend, no subject is of more interest and importance to the sinner, aroused to see in the light of divine truth, his true character before Jehovah, than the one under consideration. Feeling his insignificance in the scale of being and his vileness as a sinner, he stands afar off, trembling under a sense of extreme guilt, and cries for mercy—God be merciful to me a sinner. Pardon mine iniquity for it is great. Save me, I perish.

This work was originally designed for personal satisfaction; and in offering it to the public, our object is to exhibit the enormous evil of sin—to magnify the riches of free grace in forgiving it—to encourage the anxious, desponding and despairing sinner to flee to God for mercy, and so comfort others with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.

Though it embraces a subject of vast importance, yet from its nature and the aversion of the unrenewed heart to any thing good, it is not expected that this work will be one of general interest, eliciting the attention and applause of the world, but if it obtains the approbation of Heaven, relieves the awakened sinner, and comforts the saint, our utmost expectations will be realized. In it we have used plainness of speech, and studied brevity, often stating general propositions and scripture passages without comment, and where several passages occur together, chapter and verse are generally marked at the end in regular succession. If it will be instrumental in advancing the Divine glory and saving a soul from death, we will feel amply rewarded for our labors. We know our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord, who often works by the most obscure and humble instruments. In him we trust; on his grace and mercy we rely for life and salvation through the merits of Jesus Christ. To his blessing we commend this work, praying that sinners may be thereby converted unto Him who is rich in mercy and ready to forgive all who in truth call upon his name.

North Beaver, Pa. J. W. H.
May, 1853.

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THE

NATURE, EFFECTS AND PARDON OF SIN.

CHAPTER I.

NATURE OF SIN.

"I had not known sin, but by the law."—Rom. vii, 7.

The divine law, by which is the knowledge of sin, is a transcript of the moral nature of God. It was originally engraven on man's heart, and is perpetually binding on all men, in all ages, in all places, and in all circumstances. It is holy, just and good; exceeding broad, extending to the thoughts and intents of the heart, and serves as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. It is perfect as its author; needs no amendment, and is not capable of any improvement. But there are many whose moral perceptions and sensibilities are so stupified and hardened by sin

that they neither see nor feel its evil detected in them by the law. They are described by the pen of unerring wisdom as the whole that need not a physician, the just that need no repentance, or as men whose conscience is seared with a hot iron, past feeling, twice dead, plucked up by the roots, raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame. As they have never been aroused by the terrors of the law, to see in the light of heaven the true state of their souls before God, it can not be expected that they will regard with interest any effort that may be made to point them to the only remedy which is provided for the dying sinner. But it is not so with all. There are others whose conscience is tender, and who, smitten with the arrows of God, both see and feel the loathsome disease of sin in their soul. These awakened and anxious sinners, weeping under a true sense of sin, are in diligent search for that remedy which it is the province of the gospel to prescribe, and which they hold in the highest estimation. Like the natural man afflicted with some painful disease, they,

regardless of cost, will ransack creation to discover a true remedy for that disease, which is drinking the life-blood of their souls. Then, may the Holy Spirit assist us in discovering that remedy; and may he apply it to our souls, withering and wasting under the corroding influence of sin, that they may yet bloom in immortal youth, to honor and praise in triumphant song the God of all our mercies.

Sin is a transgression of the law, or an omission of what it requires. It is any thought, word or action, omission or desire, contrary to the divine law; it is rebellion against the nature and authority of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, who is of purer eyes than to behold evil. Numerous passages of scripture warrant this definition. They teach that omissions of duty, with regard to God or man are culpable and ruinous to the soul. "Woe unto you, Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tythe of mint, anise and cummin, and have *omitted* the weightier matters of the law—judgment, mercy and faith. These ought

ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel." Woe unto you, also, who have no benevolent hand, no sympathetic heart, to minister to Jesus Christ, in the person of his poor and afflicted and persecuted people; you have *omitted* the requirements of the law of nature and of God: therefore ye shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. It was once said, and is still true of the unrenewed man, that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually. The thought of foolishness is sin. The heart is not only the seat of life, but also the great source from which all actions, good and bad, flow, as the stream from the fountain; out of it are the issues of life; "out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false-witnesses, blasphemies. A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things, and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth evil things." Accord-

ing to the Saviour's comment on the law, the wanton look, the secret and inordinate desire, is sin in the sight of Jehovah, as well as the external act: "whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Already! Lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Alas, how many erroneously think they have fulfilled the law when they have obeyed only the letter of it; that they have kept all the commandments, when they have left the half undone. How many flatter themselves that, as touching the righteousness of the law, they are blameless; while their hearts are yet impure, covetous, unrenewed, unbelieving. But language fails to express the enormous evil of sin which is almost coeval with creation, extending its baneful influence wide as the world, and running parallel with eternity.

"O cursed, cursed sin! traitor to God
And ruiner of man! mother of wo,
And death and hell—wretched, yet seeking worse."

In nature, sin is *enslaving*. In this respect, thousands are slaves who would scorn to be called so. The Jews boasted that they were never in bondage to any man, when they had been in bondage four hundred years in Egypt, seventy years captives in Babylon, and were then tributaries to the Roman government. But to convince them that they were slaves of their own lusts, a more dreadful tyrant than man to man, Jesus said, whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin; and says Paul, know ye not, that to whom ye yield your members to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? Let any one sin obtain dominion over man, whether it be pride, profanity, intemperance, licentiousness, self love, the love of the world, or whatever it be, and it will hold him to servitude cruel as the grave. Every thing must bend to its power and contribute to its pleasure—the innocence of youth, the bloom of health, the charms of beauty, the strength of manhood, the noble powers of the mind,

the treasures of earth, the trophies of war, the laurels of fame, the sweet endearments of life, the voice of conscience, the love and service of God, and eternal felicity. For example, take covetousness, or the love of money, which is the root of all evil, and the ruling spirit of the age, swaying, in common with others, both the Throne and the Altar, already casting their crowns and sacred vestments into the "gold regions."

"Gold many hunted, sweat and bled for gold,
Waked all the night, and labored all the day,
* * * admired and called
A God, and in devout and humble plight
Before it kneeled, the greater to the less,
And on its altar sacrificed ease, peace,
Truth, faith, integrity, good conscience, friends,
Love, charity, benevolence, and all
The sweet and tender sympathies of life;
And to complete the horrid, murderous rite
And signalize their folly, offered up
Their souls, and an eternity of bliss,
To gain them what? an hour of dreaming joy,
A feverish hour that hasted to be done,
And ended in the bitterness of wo."

All this is true of any other sin, especially the sin which doth so easily beset us

It cries, give, give; and never says, enough. It reigns in our mortal body till subdued by divine power. Without this power, all our efforts, our prayers, our tears, our vigilance, our resolutions, our vows and engagements against it, are in vain. Here human nature, with all her pride and power of intellect, must confess her inability to do any thing efficiently and meritoriously good. "We have no might against this great company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee,"—our God (2 Chron. xx, 12). It is God who worketh in you, both to *will* and to *do* of his good pleasure. No man, says Christ, can come unto me except the Father who hath sent me draw him. No man can be his own saviour. His spiritual liberty and salvation must be achieved by one invested with supreme power. Accordingly, when his emancipation from sin is effected, he is said to be *brought* into the glorious liberty of the children of God. He receives the spirit of adoption: where this spirit of Christ is, there is liberty. So the institu-

tions of grace are for the express purpose of proclaiming liberty to the captive and the opening of the prison to them that are bound—bound with the servile, mortal cords of sin.

It is also the nature of sin to *deceive*. It allures, beguiles, misleads from the great fountain of life and happiness. Like its author it deceives the whole world, and like him it will yet be cast into the bottomless pit, that it may deceive the nations no more. With the exception of the Son of God, who could not be allured by the offer of all the kingdoms and glory of this world, all orders of intellectual beings have been deceived by it. The abodes of innocence were not a sufficient shield against its aggressions. The woman was beguiled and deceived by the lying lips of the old serpent, "more subtile than any beast of the field." "The man of sin" is thus described: "whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders in them that perish." He, and all under his power, have a "slight and cunning craft-

iness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect." What is more deceitful than sin? It is said the heart is deceitful above all things — not originally; nor when washed from all guile by the blood of the Lamb — but when defiled with sin the very quintessence of deceit. So wine is a mocker which, however alluring to the eye and sweet to the taste, at last bites like a serpent and stings like an adder. Sin assumes false titles, asserts false claims, offers false excuses, and makes false resolutions. It calls pride, dignity; prodigality, generosity; covetousness, prudence; revelry, sociability. It claims to do evil from antiquity and custom, from the prevalence of its influence, and from the sanctions it receives from society. It offers as an excuse, inability to do otherwise, constitutional failing, the power of Satan, and counter excellence of motive and action. It pleads for the present. It pleads the ease and readiness of future amendments. It determines only to make a few experiments in evil, and then seek and walk in the right

way. It claims the present, and gives the uncertain future to better things, puts off repentance and religion till to-morrow, and thus deceives men. Here the proverb is true: all is not gold that glitters. All is not true that sin promises. Its allurements and pleasures are but for a season; its sure reward, its total recompense to all, is vexation, disappointment and remorse. Its motions are trackless as the flight of a comet or the illusions of the ignis fatuus, the will o' the wisp, or the way of an eagle in the air, the way of a serpent upon a rock, or the way of a ship in the midst of the sea. It assumes every form and garb, from the dark serpent's coils to the shining robes of an angel of light. To personify it, she has a heart full of guile, with lying tongue and lips of flattery, " arrayed in harlot's soft attire, she lies in wait at every corner, and says: I have peace offerings with me. This day have I paid my vows. I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine linen of Egypt. I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes and

cinnamon. Come, let us take our fill of love until the morning." But he knows not that the snare is for his life; for she hath cast down many wounded; yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. Alas! poor deluded wretch, now the laughing-stock of devils and of men, in darkness pursuing sin, under a thousand forms she took and garbs she wore in every age and clime:—

"Wretched, yet seeking worse;
Polluted most, yet wallowing in the mire;
Most mad, yet drinking frenzy's giddy cup—
Folly for wisdom, guilt for innocence,
Anguish for rapture, and for hope, despair."

Nor is this all. Sin is of a *defiling* and *deforming* nature. It defiles the soul as filth does the body. The similes by which it is represented in the Bible lead to this conclusion. The plague of leprosy, which no human skill and power could remove, and which because of its ceremonial uncleanness excluded the leper from the camp of Israel, is a fit emblem of sin, which can not be re-

moved except by the blood of Christ, and which, because of its moral pollution, excludes the impenitent sinner from the new Jerusalem. Small in its beginning, yet deep-rooted and inveterate, the leprosy spread and rendered the whole man vile; no part of the leper was clean, and it was transmitted from father to son—as Elisha said to Gehazi: the leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and unto thy seed for ever. It was loathsome in appearance, making the eyes and countenance assume a horrid and distressing and painful aspect. It rendered life a curse and the leper a burden to himself. It excluded him from society and made him an object of terror to all around; all dreaded his breath and were afraid to meet him. It was incurable by human power; it polluted every thing it touched, and generally produced the most awful death; it raged till the person became one mass of filth and pollution, and then terminated in death. What an emblem of the defiling and deforming and ruinous nature of sin! Small in its beginning, yet deep-rooted and

inveterate, defiling the whole man, physical, mental and moral, it is transmitted from father to son. It extends to all the faculties of the soul and all the members of the body, the whole man, the whole race. None righteous; all guilty, abominable to God and to holy angels. In his natural state, filled with anguish, and misery depicted in his countenance, man is excluded from the family and presence of the Lord—his original beauty faded; the divine image effaced; his holiness withered—God now beholds him loathsome and vile; his features changed; the whole man polluted and without strength; his energies prostrated, and himself debased. The Jews were called a sinful nation, whose hands were defiled with blood and fingers with iniquity; their leaders were likened to whited sepulchres, beautiful without, but within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness; their hearts were like mystical Babylon, that is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. Paul, describing sin by reference to a mode

of punishment among the Romans, by which a dead body was fastened to a living one, and carried about, till it would consume away and waste its stench in the desert air, exclaims, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" What except sin is more loathsome than the putrid carcass from which nature itself recoils. Another simile is taken from the dog returning to his vomit again, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. The swine is noted for its filthiness; hence this is a striking emblem of the filthy nature of sin. Every where the scriptures denominate it by uncleanness, pollution, corruption, defilement, filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit. It is said, all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth, and to the defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, yea, even their mind and conscience is defiled—so defiled that, like a diseased man, they call good evil, and evil good; sweet, bitter, and bitter, sweet. The spiritual taste of all men in a state of nature is thus perverted, for when God spread his skirt over

his own people, he found them in this condition, and said, in the day that thou wast born no eye pitied thee, but thou wast cast out in the open field to the loathing of thy person in the day that thou wast born, and when I passed by thee and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live. When they begin to live that spiritual and immortal life, and see how far they are yet from the holiness of God, they in self abasement exclaim before him: "Unclean, unclean; woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. Behold, I am vile; wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow;" and God in mercy replies, I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you; I will also save you from all your uncleanness. There is a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness. Then,

dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. There shall in no wise enter into the new Jerusalem any thing that defileth; for this ye know, that no whoremonger nor unclean person, nor covetous man who is an idolator, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Then lay aside all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness; let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth; let your conversation be without covetousness, "the prevailing sin of the world and the ruling sin of the church." Bridle the tongue, which defileth the whole body and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. The soul of righteous Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked from day to day. We are exhorted not to defile with sin our bodies which are the temple of God. These references, among many others, prove beyond all contradiction the defiling nature of sin. By its polluting touch all nature fades as a flower of the field or a leaf of the forest

nipped by an early frost. The forest is robbed of its vernal beauty; so sin, *dishonoring* in its nature, robs man of his honor. "Slander, the foulest whelp of sin," robs him of his good name, better to him than precious ointment, thus making him miserably poor, without enriching itself. "Without a good name none can sleep soundly, even on a royal bed, or drink with relish from a golden cup; but with it, on his couch of straw or grassy pillow beneath the azure canopy of heaven, the beggar takes undisturbed repose. Its price is above riches, health, empires, life itself. But by sin man dishonors himself. The moment he breaks the law he is like Israel when the ark was taken; his glory is departed; his crown is fallen from his head, and he is become the degenerate plant of a strange vine, yielding the grapes of Sodom and the clusters of Gomorrah. This is true of all sin. Says Paul, thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law *dishonorest* thou God? Since it tramples on the authority of

Jehovah, it is true of all sin, however small in the eyes of the world, that it is dishonoring to God as well as dishonoring and ruinous to man. But some sins are confessedly so, as idolatry, licentiousness, theft, murder, perjury. Perjury robs man of fair reputation, and no less so does licentiousness, whether it be found in the liquid fires of the intoxicating draught, sinking man below the level of the brute, or leading him to give his honor to the cruel, in the polluted embrace of the adulterous bed, or the more dark, putrid and poisonous haunts of a brothel. "A wound and dishonor shall he get, and his reproach shall not be wiped away." How true is this of man, and especially of the other sex, the guardians of virtue, which if not kept inviolate brings on them an indelible stain, which tears of blood and oceans of water can not wash away. It is said of them that did not like to retain God in their knowledge, that he gave them up to dishonor their own bodies between themselves, gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things that are not convenient. The

idolator degrades himself below the creature of his own hand, changes the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things. The thief has no standing in society, nor scarcely a place in the wide world except within some massy walls, iron gates and gloomy cells. He who like Cain stains his hands with innocent blood, draws a mark of infamy on his own face and wanders awhile as a vagabond, or at length hangs on his own gibbet. But, strange to tell, by a standard of false honor in the art of chivalry, if sin can be reduced to a system and practiced by her laws of honor on a large scale; vice is called virtue—murder, heroism. One word writes the history. A "hero is a murderer above the laws, and greatly praised for doing murderous deeds;" just as in the world's vocabulary "wealth means worth; wisdom, the art of acquiring it." Riches is virtue; poverty, crime. To call a man rich, is to pronounce his highest eulogy, and to call him poor is to brand him with infamy. But, in the language of poetry,

"Honor and shame from no condition rise,
Act well your part, there all the honor lies—
Merit seldom shows itself bedecked with tinsel and fine clothes;
But hermit like 'tis oftener used to fly and hide its beauties in obscurity."

Ah, when will the world look at things in their true light, call them by their right names, and esteem and honor men not for their vices, nor for the gold ring and goodly apparel, but for their moral worth—not for their name,but for their righteous and heaven-approved conduct. When will they learn that divine and unalterable truth, "righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

In the same way the *contagious*, *diffusive*, *hardening*, and *destructive* nature of sin might be described. It is incurable by human agency. No man can cure himself nor deliver his brother from death. Human reason, human learning, human legislation, and human systems of religion, have all tried, but never did any nor all of them restore one sin-stricken soul to life and health. All have failed. God alone can deliver and save

the soul. But as these points will substantially appear again, it is sufficient now merely to mention them. It is generally admitted that some diseases are contagious, so contagious that one can scarcely go in their atmosphere without receiving the poisonous infection. They spread through a town, city, country, and even the world, and like a plague; a sweeping rain, and overwhelming torrent, carry thousands down the stream to an untimely grave. As appears from the history of war, familiarity with scenes of distress has a hardening tendency. It benumbs the sensibilities, and closes the avenues to the heart. All this is true of sin. It is a moral plague which communicates and diffuses itself through the whole country and world, cutting down in its course all, without distinction and without exception. Like the leaven in the meal it spreads through the whole human family. Hence the testimony of scripture, is "evil communications corrupt good manners, and one sinner destroys much good; a companion of fools shall be destroyed." Sin reigned from

Adam to Moses. It has spread through the whole man; the whole species—not one exempt. It has seared the conscience until past feeling; twice dead; until man has restrained prayer before God—grown bold in crime—gloried in his shame, and sat down in the scorner's chair. It closes the eye, stops the ear, and hardens the heart against the invitations of the Gospel—the voice of conscience; the strivings of the Holy Spirit; the admonitions of Providence, and the warnings of the Bible. Stiffened in the cold it excites pity, but warmed and cherished in the affections, it recovers its natural strength and stings its benefactor.

> "Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
> Aa to be hated, needs but to be seen,
> But seen too oft, familiar with its face,
> We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

But alas, it is a mortal embrace; sin when it is finished bringeth forth death; the wages of sin is death; death in its most alarming features; death temporal, spiritual and eternal; certain in its event; irresistible in its approach; universal in its extent; dreadful in

its ravages and eternal in its consequences. All this, unless the sting is extracted by Him who triumphed over death and the grave.

"O death—thou hast been the terror long,
And murderer of all of woman born,
None could escape thee—
Thou satt'st from age to age insatiate,
And drank the blood of men, and gorged their flesh;
And with thy iron teeth didst grind their bones
To powder—treading out beneath thy feet
Their very names and memories; the blood
Of nations could not slake thy parched throat.
No bribe could buy thy favour for an hour,
Or mitigate thy ever cruel rage
For human prey. Gold, beauty, virtue, youth;
Even helpless swaddled innocency failed
To soften thy heart of stone; the infant's blood
Pleased well thy taste—and while the mother wept
Bereaved by thee, lonely and waste in woe,
Thy ever grinding jaws devoured her too."

"Death! great proprietor of all! 'tis thine
To tread out empire, and to quench the stars;
The sun himself by thy permission shines,
And one day thou shalt pluck him from his sphere."

In view of all this, well may it be asked in the language of inspiration: "What

fruit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed, for the end of those things is death."

CHAPTER II.

EFFECTS OF SIN.

The tree is known by his fruit. Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? Mat. vi, 16; xii, 33. As sin is an evil tree spontaneously sprung up in its own native soil, it never yields anything better than thorns. Its germ was first found among the rebel angels, but their celestial abode being uncongenial to its growth, it has planted its roots deep in the earth, rearing its trunk and extending its branches far and wide through the universe to supply fuel for eternal fires. To the eye its luxuriant fruit seems beautiful as apples of gold in pictures of silver, and supposing it is equally delicious to the taste, no order of beings was too high and holy not to pluck and eat. But all have found its poisonous, mortal taste more bitter than the gall of wormwood and

death. The *angels* of heaven found it so. Among them, aspiring to be Gods, sin had its origin. And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought and prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. Rev. xii. The battle was soon decided. The Most High prevailed over the rebel angels, and in "judgment pursued them with terrors to the crystal wall of heaven, and from its verge cast them down headlong" bound hand and foot without hope and without mercy into the bottomless pit. For them no ransom is provided. They must lie down in eternal despair. Peter informs us that God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment. With reference to this whole transaction, Isaiah exclaims "How art thou fallen, O Lucifer son of the morning; thou that saidst in thine heart I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God. I will be like the Most High, yet thou shalt

be cast down to hell to the sides of the pit." Isa. xiv.

"But his doom
Reserved him to more wrath, for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him—
A dungeon horrible on all sides round
As one great furnace flamed, yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible,
Served only to discover sights of woe—
Regions of sorrow! doleful shades! where peace
And rest can never dwell, but torture without end
Still reigns, and a fiery deluge fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed—
—But O how fallen! how changed—
Is this the region; this the soil—the clime—this the seat
That we must change for heaven? This mournful gloom
For that celestial light? be it so!—
Farewell happy fields
Where joy forever dwells! hail horrors! hail
Infernal world! and thou profoundest hell
Receive thy new possessor!"

So sung the prince of poets concerning the *fallen angels,* and had sin been confined to them, this earth would have remained in its original beauty and grandeur; the blessed

abode of man. But alas! *he* too has tasted the *bitter* fruit of sin and felt the shock that once resounded thro' the spacious vaults of heaven. Its first effect on man was to divest him of his original righteousness, and expel him from paradise. This first disobedience brought death into the world, and all our woe. That moment his happiness fled like the morning cloud and early dew; sin impaired all his faculties, physical, mental, and moral. It deprived him of blessings innumerable both of a temporal and spiritual nature, and brought on him and his posterity a train of positive evils without number and without end. Speaking of man's first sin, the sacred historian says, their eyes were opened, and they knew that they were *naked.* Knew that by their own wayward act they were divested of original righteousness; of the divine image; of their crown which had now fallen from their heads, and knew that they had thus become wretched, miserable, unprotected, and exposed to the wrath of an offended God. As a consequence of this act, fear and shame and anguish seized

their hearts, and trembling all dismayed, they hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God, among the trees of the garden. But he whose eyes are as a flame of fire: before whom all things are naked and open; who searches Jerusalem as with lighted candles, and sets our secret faults before the brightness of his face; discovered them in their concealment, and summoned them to appear before his presence, and passed a sentence multiplying their sorrow; dooming them to the toils and miseries of life, and finally to death itself; expelling them from that garden which was too holy and delightful to be an abode of the guilty, and sending them into the wide world now cursed for their sake, where new toils and new troubles awaited them. And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil, and now lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man, and he placed

Cherubim and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. It is true that the sentence of death threatened in case of disobedience, was not *literally* executed on man in the day he sinned; but that moment he died spiritually and legally, and became mortal and liable to temporal and eternal death. The seeds of mortality were sown in his constitution. His body was now subject to internal diseases and external injuries; it was exposed to the wasting influence of the elements; it was doomed to decline in vigour and activity and to feel the infirmities of old age and at last sink into the grave. At the same time his mind was disturbed with fear hitherto unknown, and the awful prospect of the termination of his earthly career aggravated the other evils which he suffered and embittered his remaining pleasures. He lost all hope of the happiness which would have been the reward of his obedience, and would have consisted in the enjoyment of endless life and felicity. His right to it depended on his fulfilling the terms of the covenant,

and as he failed to fulfill them, he had no claim to the promise. That noble prize which would have blessed him and his posterity through the ages of eternity was forever forfeited. He fell under the curse, and being unable to extricate himself from its power, he was still less capable of regaining, by his utmost exertions the immense reward which having been once rejected, would not be offered again. He was rejected from paradise that he might not with presumptuous hand pluck the fruit of the tree of life; the symbol and seal of immortality. In the day of his transgression he underwent spiritual death. His sin shed its baneful influence over his soul, and in a moment turned its beauty into deformity. The image of God was totally lost. The tie that bound him to his Creator, and inspired and sustained his moral excellence, withered and died like the verdure of autumn. "Nothing remained but his natural faculties, weakened and corrupted; a darkened understanding, a wayward will; sensual appetites, and irregular affections. The change was sudden,

but it was complete. Human nature was essentially the same, but it was divested of its brightest ornaments." Its glory was departed. The effects of sin spread over the whole human family. It is owing to Adam's sin, that "death has ever since been making havoc of mankind, and sweeping one generation after another into the grave. It is owing to his sin that holiness has been banished from the earth, and crimes and miseries have been multiplied from age to age; it is owing to his sin that myriads of beings capable of immortal felicity, and endless improvement have been lost, and are doomed to spend an interminable existence in sorrow and despair." By one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned. Ro. v, 12. This truth is corroborated by the sufferings and death of infants which can not be accounted for except by admitting that they sinned and fell in Adam as the representative of his posterity. God is infinitely holy and just, and never can inflict punishment on an innocent

being, and especially such a punishment as death, without ceasing to be what he is, a "God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he—just in all that is brought on us—a just God and a Saviour," to whom it may well be said:

> Justice and judgment of thy throne are made the dwelling place;
> Mercy, accompanied with truth, shall go before thy [face.

Death reigned from Adam to Moses even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression. Ro. v, 14. But waiving this point, "the body is affected by the elements; by vicissitudes of cold and heat; by the air which it breathes; by the rain and dew of heaven: by exhalations from the earth, and the waters, which cause sickness, pain, debility and decay. It is worn out by the toil which is necessary to procure a subsistence." Diseases of various names which assail us by day and by night; earthquakes, famine and pestilence, are means by which God avenges the violation of his law. To these may be added, "the anxiety, the fear, the disappointments,

the regret, the foreboding apprehensions which haunt the mind, and, in consequence of the intimate connection between the soul and body, make the latter pine away and sink into an untimely grave." Even temporal death is a great evil. It was particularly so to Adam, who having the prospect of eternal life and endless felicity was suddenly brought to a state that would soon terminate in darkness. He must have trembled at the dreadful sentence, and been for a moment sunk in despair. Though life does not now possess the attractions it did to him, yet all that a man hath will he give for his life. It is his constant care and labor to preserve it and to support it from dangers and repair its injuries, he calls in the aid of others. The very thought of dissolution is terrible, at which we shudder and turn pale. "To be arrested in the midst of our career; to be separated forever from those we love; to close our eyes for the last time on the light of the sun; to give up our joys and hopes with our parting sigh," is an evil of no small magnitude, and if temporal death

is such an evil, what is spiritual and eternal? No tongue during the longest period of time can answer this question. Its solution remains for eternity. But this evil in all its magnitude is the effect of sin; yea the first sin of man, which to the unreflecting mind appears trifling, but which expelled man from paradise; brought death into the world and all our woe.

" O unexpected stroke, worse than death!
Must I leave thee Paradise? thus leave
Thee native soil? These happy walks and shades
Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to spend
Quiet though sad, the respite of that day
That must be mortal to us both. O flowers
That never will in other climate grow,
My early visitation and my last—
Thee lastly nuptial bower by me adorn'd
With what to sight or smell was sweet, from thse
How shall I part, and wither wander down
Into a lower world, to this obscure
And wild? How shall we breathe in other air
Less pure, accustomed to immortal fruits?"

Did sin cast the angels out of heaven into the regions of despair; did it drive mad out of paradise into a world of sin and sorrow; rob him of the divine image; hide

God's face and prevent that enjoyment with him, which belonged to a state of innocence; so it still deprives him of that communion which is the earnest and constant desire of the heaven-born soul; hides God's face and draws a cloud over the evidences of his favour and loving kindness which are better than life. This is beyond doubt, and this is the reason why so many Christians walk in darkness and have no light. Sin of some kind and degree deprives them of it. Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness, and what concord hath Christ with Belial. Isa. lix, 2; 2 Cor. vi., 14, 15. It not only hides his face but stops his ears against our prayers. If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me. Ps. lxvi., 18. If we have no tokens of God's favor or light of his countenance, or answer to prayer, it is because of sin. Yea, it prevents blessings without number, affecting

nature itself as well as *man* and *beast.* Cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee. The testimony of scripture is, that the whole creation, groans and travails together in pain till now; with pain inflicted by barbarous and unmerciful men on animals in their service; with pain from cruelty, starvation, and consequent decay. The eruptions of the burning mountain, and the reeling of the rumbling earthquake; the fury of the howling wind and raging tempest, and ocean's roar, and thunder's peal, or the war of elements, together with the fires, of persecution, and desolations of wars famine, plague and pestilence; their consequent attendants, are all indications of nature groaning under the wide spread evil of sin. Because of it the showers of heaven are stayed, and the fields yield no meat; the flock is cut off from the fold, and there is no herd in the stall. A fruitful land is turned into barrenness, for the wickedness of those that dwell therein; for this the showers of

heaven have been withholden; the former and latter rain are not given. He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of harvest; because, says the prophet, your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. Jer. v, 25. And Zechariah foretold, that upon those who would not come up to Jerusalem, to worship the king, the Lord of hosts, even upon them there shall be no rain. Ah, how seldom men now think that irreligion is the cause of drought and of famine. They will not worship the King of heaven, and honor him with their substance; hence their barns are not filled with plenty and their presses do not burst out with new wine. They sow much and bring in little; they earn wages to put it into a bag with holes. Why? saith the Lord of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man to his own house; therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. (Hag. i.) For sin, temporal, spiritual and eternal punishment is inflicted on individuals and nations. A melancholy

list of evils threatened against the disobedient, is found in Deuteronomy, 28th chapter. Among these are vexation, disappointment, the sword, famine, pestilence, destruction, frowns of heaven and of the earth, whose rain shall be powder and dust; captivity, madness, blindness, astonishment, the want of burial, the botch of Egypt, the defilement and bereavement of those we hold most dear; oppression and evil evermore. According to the law of his house, Jehovah punished his people for all their iniquities; visited their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes. For his sin, the sword never departed from David's house, and for the iniquity of Israel's covetousness, the Lord says, I was wroth and smote him. I hid me and was wroth because they forsook and limited the Most High, and forgot his wonders in Egypt, when he destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamore trees with frost, and gave their cattle also to hail, and their flocks to hot thunder bolts; because they turned back from him, and moved him to jealousy with

their graven images, he forsook Israel, and delivered his strength into captivity; gave his people over to the sword; the fire consumed their young men, and their maidens were not given in marriage; their priests fell by the sword, and their widows made no lamentations. For their murmuring and mutiny, their unbelief and carnal apostatizing spirit in not following the Lord wholly, they were sent from the borders of Canaan into the howling wilderness, where they consumed their days in vanity, and their years in trouble; and though, as a people, they eventually inherited the land of promise, yet their subsequent captivity in Babylon, and subjection to the Roman government, and their present dispersion among all nations, is a living monument of the dreadful effects of sin. It affects the *mental*, *moral* and *physical* man. This is true, especially of intemperance and sensuality. How much physical strength, and mental energy, and moral principle—how many cities and armies have been ruined by the intoxicating draught? —how much discord and ruin in families,

churches and society—how much disease, poverty and crime, and disgrace, and premature and eternal death has it occasioned? Let the downfall of Babylon and the Roman empire—let history, sacred and profane—let our prisons and courts of justice—let physicians and hospitals—let the tears of widows and orphans, and let the word of eternal truth answer these enquiries, each of which might furnish a separate volume. "Who hath woe, who hath sorrow, who hath contentions, who hath babblings, who hath wounds without cause, who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to seek mixed wine." "The drunkard shall not inherit the kingdom of God." The same ruinous effect is produced on the moral principle, on body, soul and spirit, by sensuality. It has produced filthy conversation and hereditary disease. It has prostrated the noblest powers of man to the level of an idiot; brought him to poverty and disgrace, and sunk him into the pit of eternal death. Trampling on all law, human and divine, and natural, it often places its victim beyond

the reach of recovery; for by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread. None that go unto her return again, she hath cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. Hence, remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house, lest thou give thine honor unto others, and thy years unto the cruel;—lest strangers be filled with thy wealth and thou mourn at the last, when thy *flesh* and thy *body* are consumed, and say, how have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof, and have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me. (Prov.)

"At morn
I looked and saw him not among the youths,
I heard his father mourn, his mother weep;
For none returned that went with her; the dead
Were in her house; her guests in depths of hell:
She wove the winding sheet of souls and laid
Them in the urn of everlasting death."

The mental anxiety and distress, the terrors that surprise the hypocrite, the gnaw-

ings of a guilty conscience which needs no accuser, the fearful apprehensions of punishment, both in this life and in the next, and the stupifying and searing of the conscience to such an extent, that men call evil good and good evil, and glory in their shame. All these are the fruits of sin. Sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfullness hath surprised the hypocrite, a dreadful sound is in his ears—in prosperity the destroyer shall come upon him. The wicked flee when no man pursues. All sinners are afraid of divine judgments, and loss of reputation. Joseph's brethren, under a mysterious providence, were afraid, and said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; *therefore* is this distress come upon us; and Judah said, What shall we say unto my Lord? and what shall we speak? or how shallwe clear ourselves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants. (Gen. xlii, xxi, 44, 16.) David was afraid that he would be cast out of God's sight, like those that lie in the grave, who are no more

remembered, and, under the wasting influence of this fear, said, my flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments. (Ps. lxxxviii, 5; cxix, 120.) Even Job said, the thing I greatly feared is come upon me—the terrors of God are within me, the poison whereof drinks up my spirits. These mental troubles are expressed in scripture, by waters coming into the soul—by water spouts—by wave succeeding wave and billows passing over the soul—by sinking in deep mire—by a loathsome disease — by broken bones, and roaring night and day,—by wrath, lying hard, and the terrors of God sticking fast in the sinner, by a body of death, by the sorrows of hell encompassing the soul, and by many such similies as appears from Job, David and Paul. These are divine rebukes for sin, distressing the soul, and *wasting* the conscience, awakened by a sense of guilt. This is the worm that never dies, the fire that is never quenched, but produces eternal weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth. These are some of the dire effects of sin, seen in the poverty, and distress, and disappointment, and afflict-

ions, and crosses of the world, and in the gloom of the grave—seen in the torments of an awakened conscience, smitten by the lightnings of divine wrath, and aroused from its stupor to the horrors of despair — seen in separation from God, the fountain of life and comfort—and seen in the first great sin which brought down the curse of Jehovah on countless generations, and ruined the world.

But the *clearest view of the evil of sin, is* obtained from *the hill of Calvary*, crimsoned with blood divine. There Jesus paid the enormous debt of sin by the price of his own blood. Though he was rich, yet for your sakes he become poor that ye through his poverty might be rich. He was daily his Father's delight, rejoicing always before him, but he veiled his uncreated glory in our nature, to make atonement for sin, and raise us, guilty and wretched with crime, to the throne and dignity of heaven ! Passing great were his humiliation and sufferings, who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him

the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. In the obedience and sufferings of Christ, even unto death, is given the clearest possible evidence of the Father's displeasure at sin. Who can comprehend the full import of that language. "He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all" —delivered him up to the vengeance of the broken and inexorable law—to the furbished sword of inflexible justice—to the insatiable demands of avarice, bigotry and prejudice—to the rage of his implacable enemies—to the cruelty of the merciless soldiery—to the buffeting of Satan, and the cup of wrath due to us for sin. God delivered up his only begotten Son, the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, to sufferings and death for sinners! This dear Saviour—this Son of the Highest was made flesh—made of a woman—made under the law—born in a stable and laid in a manger—was an exile from his country—despised of men and re-

jected of the people, prayed to depart out of their coasts, reproached as a Galilean, as a perverter of the nation, as a wine bibber, a gluttonous man, a friend of publicans and sinners, a deceiver, a blasphemer, in league with Satan casting out devils—was stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. Follow him to the garden of Gethsemane, baptised with his bloody sweat, where heart-broken with reproach, and full of heaviness, without any to pity or comfort him, and being in agony, he prayed more earnestly, while the disciples where fast asleep on that sacred ground. It was night. The noise of tumultuous life had ceased, nature was at rest, the stars poured down their splendor, and the gentle breezes, fragrant with spices, blew softly along. Jerusalem slumbered in security, disturbed only by the watchman's step and the murmuring of Kedron passing by. All was tranquil, when lo! torches were seen advancing in the distance, and the onward march of soldiery soon broke the sweet repose—their helmets and shields glittered in the blazing light of their torches. They

advanced, guided on their way by the infamous traitor, and, in a moment, Jesus was surrounded by the "bulls of Bashan," betrayed with a kiss, seized and taken, as a prisoner from the garden through the streets of Jerusalem to the house of the high priest. Peter followed afar off. The chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him. Herod with his men of war set him at nought, mocked him, arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate who, after examination, found no fault in him, and resolved to chastise him and release him; but this only added fuel to the flame of passion already kindled, and they cried out all at once, away with him, crucify him, crucify him! Pilate said unto them the third time, why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him, I will therefore chastise him and let him go; but they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified, and the voices of them and the chief priests prevailed. Then, the blessed Jesus was delivered up to the base and infuriated multitude, who like ravening

wolves, wreaked on him all their infernal rage, and like hissing adders began to spit in his face, and smite him with the palms of their hands, and with reeds, to buffet him, to cover his face, and with insulting mockery, cry, Prophecy, who it is that smote Thee. They put a crown of thorns on his head, and led him away to be crucified. The tumult now rose to its height, the raging waves of human passion displayed all their terrors, and he gave his back to the smiters and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. When he was reviled he reviled not again, when he suffered he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. Neither Pilate nor the prince of this world found any fault in him, yet the raging multitude, deaf to every feeling of humanity, and the voice of conscience, cried out, away with him, crucify him, crucify him, his blood be on us and on our children. A thousand voices on every side uttered in wild confusion, this fearful language, and Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required. Dreadful sentence ! Amid these insulting

enemies, and the carnal security of that city over which he wept, the Saviour passed, bearing his cross, till nature failed, when Simon, a Cyrenian, was compelled to bear the cross after Jesus, to the place of execution. To his friends, following after, mingling their lamentations with the shouts of the mob, he exclaimed in plaintive tones, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. At length they reach the top of Calvary, and stretch Jesus upon the cross—the nails are driven through the quivering tendons of his hands and feet—then he is raised from the ground, and with his whole weight hanging on the nails, he is left to die, amidst the reproach of his foes, crying "He saved others, himself he can not save—come down from the cross if thou be be the Son of God." But what were these revilings, what the cross, what the thorny crown, what the spitting, and smiting, and scourging, and mocking of his foes, what the buffeting of Satan, what the desertion of his friends, what was all else, to the desertion of his Father and the cup which he gave

him to drink? It was this that made the waters come into his soul now troubled and exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, melted like wax in the midst of his bowels, and his bones all out of joint. But what he suffered in his soul. when he endured the wrath due for sin, must ever surpass all powers of description and conception. Here is the highest pitch of suffering, every variety of agony, excessive sorrow, unutterable load of dejection, inexpressible wonder, alarm, and anguish at the curse of the law, and the load of wrath due for sin, met in his soul. The period of his mysterious agony, his awful desertion and actual death, is called his hour ;—the hour and power of darkness—the hour that he was to go out of this world, make atonement for sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness. During this period every aid, human and divine, withdrew itself; he trod the wine press alone, and of the people there was none with him—none of all he healed came to his relief in his last extremity, and his Father hid his face. Here, the tide of suffering rose to its height—here,

every thing painful, ignominious, distressing, terrific and overwhelming met in him. Here, also is a scene, whether to the sufferer or to the guilty world, is the most awful and momentous that ever occurred—a scene which excites mingled emotions of joy and sorrow, the sympathies of his people, the envy of devils, and the admiration of saints and angels—a scene at which all nature was moved. But it was his desertion, as he stood alone in the darkened universe, that brought from *him* that piercing cry which terrified and shook the world, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? He said, it is finished, and bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. At the sound of that cry, falling from the cross on the astonished multitude, the veil of the temple was rent in twain, from top to bottom. The sun darkened in the heavens, the earth groaned as if about to expire, "an earthquake thundered on;"—to complete the tragedy, the dead rose from their long slumbers, and came forth to witness the awful scene. Darkness covered all the land, from the sixth to the ninth hour, and the Cen-

turion, and they that werewith him, watching Jesus feared greatly, saying, truly this was the Son of God. Most terrible scene, fit to melt the heart of stone, and fill the universe with alarm, and astonishing to tell, no intercessor interposed for the Saviour's relief, and no "thunderbolt fell from heaven" to destroy his murderers. At such a scene well might the heart melt and bleed at every pore, well might nature mourn, and angels weep, and silence prevail in Heaven, on hearing the dying groans of Calvary.

"The sun beheld it! No, the shocking scene
Drove back his chariot, midnight veiled his face.
Sun! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain! or start
At that enormous load of human guilt
Which bowed his blessed head, o'erwhelmed his cross,
Made groan the centre, burst earth's marble womb,
With pangs, strange pangs! delivered of her dead!
Hell howled, and Heaven that hour let fall a tear;
Heaven wept that man might smile, Heaven bled that man
Might never die."—

Communion with God is the life of his soul and the cry of desertion intimated that the joy and happiness of his soul were de-

parting, and that his whole nature was tossed amid the billows of unmitigated woe. The tokens of God's comforting presence were suspended, "the Godhead seemed to retire and sleep while his humanity suffered." He felt in his soul that he was separated from the fountain of all blessedness, and the pains of hell got hold on him, enduring the wrath due for sin, of which this desertion was a part. This dreadful scene displayed at once the evil of sin, the justice of God, the love of Christ, the value of the soul, and the triumphs of the Saviour, eventually ascending from the darkness of the tomb amid the shouts of angels to the glory of his Father; and to give value and dignity to the whole scene, these extreme sufferings were vicarious, and voluntary, and efficacious on the part of Jesus, who put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, who, having power to lay down his life and to take it again, *gave* himself a ransom for many—a ransom for all; *gave* himself for *us* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor. Had he not *thus* given himself, neither the rage of the Jews, nor

the power of the Romans, nor all the created powers of the universe could have torn him from his throne,—nailed him to the cross and accomplished this wondrous tragedy. But the appalling scene is past— the work of redemption is finished. Rage has done its utmost. Sorrow filled the disciples' hearts—the raging multitude that came with insults and mockery returned home smiting their breast—astonished and trembling nature recovered from her shock—the darkened heavens brightening again, laid aside their habiliments of mourning and cast down their golden rays, while the gentle zephyrs blew softly over the verdant fields and fragrant flowers. In dying, Jesus conquered, triumphing over death and the grave, over principalities and powers making a show of them, openly triumphing over them in his cross. He hurled Satan from his throne and cast him like lightening from heaven and by the consoling words addressed to the penitent thief, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise," gave his people a sure pledge of glory and immortality when time shall be no more. The ensigns of mock royalty put

into his hands were converted by his Father into the instruments of his absolute power and universal dominion. The cross from which his blood flowed as from a high altar to cleanse from all sin, and which his foes thought would stigmatize his followers with reproach, became their standard of royalty around which, they would rally with joy, and their banner that would wave in triumph over the world. At the foot of the cross, the Gentiles waited for his law, and the rod of his power went forth from Jerusalem, bringing joy and gladness, and proclaiming to the ends of the earth that men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed. Such were the events and triumph of that hour in which Jesus, with a soul full of trouble, suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. He saw them in their incipient state,—saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied. Now, with joy he said, it is finished. As a conqueror he retired from the field reviewing his conquests, and is henceforth hailed as the Glorious King of men and Angels, Head over all things to the

church, which is his body the fullness of him that filleth all in all.

CHAPTER III.

PARDON OF SIN.

If sin be such an evil as has been imperfectly described, the question naturally arises, is there any way to be delivered from it, or must we lie down in our shame, and our confusion cover us, must we dwell with everlasting burnings? To this all important question, scripture alone can furnish a satisfactory answer; and hence our subsequent remarks must be abundantly supported by the word of eternal truth, and to its praise let it ever be said that God has not left us without hope concerning this thing, but, in the plentitude of his mercy, proclaims, in his word, pardon to the chief of sinners. How sweet and encouraging is the language of Daniel

in behalf of sinners, suffering the just demerit of their sins, "To the Lord our God belong mercies and forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him," (Dan. ix, 9). This language conveys at once the strangely connected truth "To err is human, to forgive divine"—*God is the only author of forgiveness.* Who can forgive sins but God only? (Mark ii, 7). Can any of the vanities of the Gentiles, can any of the rulers of this world—can the "man of sin," who exalts himself above all that is called God and is worshiped and professes to exercise this power, or can all the combined powers of the universe forgive sin? No, this is God's prerogative, belonging exclusively to him. There may be a judicial declaration of pardon, by those to whom the keys of the kingdom are committed, for the spiritual government of the church. To them it is said, whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, (John xx, 23) but it is God only, who can remove the guilt and pollution of sin. As this is above human power, they do not pretend to do it. Under the law, the

priest only pronounced the leper clean or unclean as the case might be, but never, in any case, healed the leprosy which defied all created power. It is so with the leprosy of sin, God alone can remove it. Remission of sin is an act of Almighty power, every way becoming and worthy of God. God graciously forgives our sins, and none forgives like him. With admiration and praise we may exclaim, Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the trangression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger forever because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us, he will subdue our iniquities, and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea, (Mic. vii, 18, 19). He requires us to forgive that we may be forgiven,—forgive till seventy times seven, and certainly he will not do less than he requires of us. Nay, he multiplies to pardon above all our conceptions. He will abundantly pardon, (Isa. lv, 7, 9). Plenteous redemption is ever found with him. (Psalm cxxx. He pardons according to

the greatness of his power and the greatness of his mercy from Egypt land till now, (Numb. xiv, 17, 20) O, who can comprehend the greatness of this power, this mercy, and its continuance! Because he is God and not man, he will not execute the fierceness of his anger nor stir up all his wrath. If it were kindled but a little, blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Pardon is the *sovereign act of God* who exercises it on the objects of his pleasure as he said to Moses, desiring to see his glory, I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, (Ex. xxxiii, 19; Rom. ix, 15). This truth before which the world trembles, is exemplified in the salvation of men and not of angels, in the salvation of some and not of others, even apparently near the kingdom of heaven, in taking one of a family and two of a city, and bringing them to Zion, (Jer. iii, 4). For this exercise of mercy, no reason can be given but that which Jesus himself gave, "Even so Father, for so it seems good in thy sight." There is a reason that seems

right to the divine mind, and this is sufficient to justify his conduct, and this should satisfy us till it be revealed, when it will appear to the whole world that the Judge of all the earth has done right.

Though pardon does not necessarily flow from God, as the stream from the fountain, or as light emanates from the sun, yet it is *free in its bestowment*, suspended on no *condition* of ours as a *meritorious* ground of its reception. Even faith is only the instrument of receiving forgiveness, and is neither the condition nor the procuring cause of it; for faith is the gift of God, a supernatural grace, and hence can not be a condition of pardon. Nor is remission of sins granted for ancestry, for wealth, for works, for talents, for learning, for external relation to the church, or any such thing. It is bestowed according to the good pleasure of *his* will. We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, (Eph. i, 5–7). Hence it is of grace, and not of works. Jesus Christ is exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repent-

ance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. This truth is taught throughout the scriptures, which declare, ye have sold yourselves for nought, ye shall be redeemed without money, —come, buy wine and milk without money and without price,—come eat of my bread and drink of the wine which I have mingled, —come take the water of life freely. I am the living bread which came down from Heaven, if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever, and the bread which I will give him is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. Knowing that we are naturally wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked,—that in our flesh dwells no good thing,—that we have nothing to bring as an equivalent, Christ has made provision according to our wants, and the riches of his grace. The method of pardon is strange to the unrenewed and anxious sinner, whose language is, wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old; will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams or

with ten thousands of rivers of oil; shall I give my first born for my trangression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? or what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life; what must I do to be saved; what must I give to procure salvation? Like Simon, he comes with a price in his hand, a price of wealth, of works of merit; and if he can find none of these in himself of sufficient value to commend him to the divine mercy, or if he can make no amends for the past, he is often brought to the borders of despair, from which he is relieved only by seeing that pardon is *free* as the air, suspended on *no human merit.* God forgives freely, I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Praise the Lord, O my soul for this plan of salvation, by which lost, helpless sinners can obtain pardon and eternal life.

But though free to us, *pardon is procured by an infinite price,*—a price more precious than rubies,—than the gold of Ophir,—than the world and its fullness. What is said of wisdom

is true of this,—Man knoweth not the price thereof, neither is it found in the land of the living. The depth saith it is not in me and the sea saith it is not with me. It can not be gotten for gold neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It can not be valued with the gold of Ophir,—with the precious onyx or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal can not equal it, and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral or of pearls, for the price of it is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold (Job xxviii, 13, 19). Whence then cometh its price? Not from the blood of legal sacrifices which could never take away sin, nor from human blood and human merit, but from blood divine. Blood is the price of pardon. Without shedding of blood is no remission. When there was none to pity and no arm that could save, God's eye pitied and his arm brought salvation. He found out a ransom. He spared not his own son but delivered him up for us all Herein God com-

mendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. He purchased the church with his own blood. Ye are redeemed not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish; and by the same precious blood, he has entered heaven, and taken possession in our name. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. He made his soul an offering for sin, and by that one offering, he has perfected forever them that are sanctified; and the triumphant song of the redeemed in glory is—unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, to him be glory, and honor, and dominion, forever and ever; and they sing a new song saying thou art worthy to take the book, and open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy own blood, out every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. O, astonishing wondrous price. The price of the Saviour's blood!

Jesus died for our sins,—and rose again for our justification.

"The ransom was paid down, the fund of heav'n
Heaven's inexhaustible, exhausted fund
Amazing and amazed pour'd forth the price
All price beyond; Tho' curious to compute
Archangels failed to cast the mighty sum
Its value vast ungrasped by minds create
Forever hides and glows in the Supreme"—
O my soul "survey the wondrous cure!
And at each step let higher wonder rise!
Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon
Thro' means that speaks its value infinite!
A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine!
With blood divine of him I made my foe!
Persisted to provoke! Tho' woo'd and aw'd
Bless'd and chastis'd a flagrant rebel still:
A rebel 'midst the thunders of his throne!
Nor I alone! a rebel universe!
My species up in arms! not one exempt!
Yet for the foulest of the foul he dies;
Most joyed for the redeemed from deepest guilt!
As if our race were held of highest rank
And Godhead dearer as more kind to man!"

This dear bought pardon is *full, extending, with one exception, to all sin of every degree and of any number.* All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but

the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men, (Matt. xii, 31). This is often called the unpardonable sin; and what that peculiar sin is, has often been a subject of anxious inquiry. It may consist in a willful, malicious, avowed and constant rejection of Jesus Christ, against the convictions of conscience, the evidence of truth, and the influences of the Holy Spirit; as the Scribes and Pharisees, to whom this text was first applied rejected him, or since the Saviour has committed the affairs of his kingdom unto the Holy Spirit, (John xvi, 7 – 15), that he may be exalted and honored even as the Father and the Son, and receiving from them may act in their name, it consists in thus denying, despising, rejecting and reproaching the divinity, personality and operations of the Holy Spirit in the church, and in the world; and it is clear as a sunbeam that when men thus reject the only sacrifice for sin, and the Holy Spirit of promise, by whom sinners are renewed after the divine image, and sealed until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory, they

can not be forgiven. They sin knowingly, willfully, maliciously, avowedly, obstinately, and constantly persist in their sin. How, in such a case can they look for pardon any more than those who have gone into everlasting punishment, where no ray of hope ever enters, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. With this exception, pardon *extends to all sins however numerous, great, aggravated, long standing, or often repeated.* Under the law no sacrifice was provided for some sins, as idolatry, adultery, cursing God or parents, breaking the Sabbath, and for presumptuous sin. These were punished with immediate death. But now, all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could *not* be justified by the law of Moses. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin—if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, (Acts xiii, 39; 1 John i, 7–9). All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men. When God returns the captivity of Judah and Israel, he says, I will

cleanse them from all their iniquity whereby they have sinned against me, and I will pardon all their iniquities. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. I will also save you from all your uncleanesses. Bless the Lord O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, (Jer. xxxiii, 8; Ezk. xxxvi, 25, 29; Psa. ciii, 2, 3). There is no exception, all thine iniquities, all sin, all manner of sin is forgiven. In the language of Dr. Owen, "Without mention of particulars, I may safely say, that there is no sin, no degree of sin, no aggravating circumstance of sin, no kind of continuance in sin, (one sin only excepted) but that there are those in heaven, who have been guilty of them." The nature of the covenant of grace, well ordered in all things and sure, the gracious character of God who is rich in mercy and ready to forgive, and who has forgiven the chief of sinners, and the all sufficiency of the atonement which Jesus has

made for our sins, lead to the same comfortable conclusion. Our blessed Saviour is able and willing to save to the uttermost. He came to do the will of Him who sent him, and his revealed will is, that all men might be saved and come unto the knowledge of the truth; and says Christ, him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out, no in no wise, on no account. To the poor trembling sinner, desiring to be washed from his sins, his endearing, consoling language is, "I will; be thou clean." It has pleased the Father that in Christ Jesus should all fullness dwell; all wisdom for our instruction, all power to protect us, all merit to save and all grace to glorify us. All power is given to him in Heaven and in earth, for bringing many sons to glory. Then, it would be an impeachment of the divine veracity and a reflection on the Saviour's merits to suppose, for a moment, that his blood does not cleanse from *all* sin. It is a fountain open for sin and for uncleanness. It descends into the deepest valleys and prevails over the highest mountains of sin, many cubits upwards, and it will never

fail to accomplish the great and glorious end for which it was opened, in the eternal counsel of God, in the promises, types, and prophecies of the Old Testament, and in their fulfillment. God grants pardon, Jesus procures it, the gospel reveals it, and the Holy Spirit applies and seals it to all them that believe; and when we remember that God is Omnipotent, that man's salvation from first to last is all to the praise of the riches of the glory of his grace, we can not, for a moment, hesitate in saying that the pardon which he grants is full, extending to all sin.

It is also *irrevocable, unchangeable, everlasting.* The sentence of acquittal, that has gone forth from the Lord, will never be reversed nor recalled. Hath he said it, and will he not do it? Hath he spoken it, and will he not make it good? He is not man that he should lie, nor the son of man, that he should repent; and sooner will heaven and earth pass away, than one word of all he has spoken, fail to come to pass. The gifts and callings of God, are without repentance. Christ has

made atonement for our sins. Divine justice is satisfied, and will never require a second payment. There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. God does not forgive them to-day, and condemn them to-morrow. He does not write their name in the book of life, and again blot it out, (Rev. iii, 5). If his children go astray he will visit their faults with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes; but he will not take his love from them, nor make false his promise. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee, (Psa. lxxxix, 33; Isa. liv, 10). The language by which pardon is expressed, proves that it is everlasting. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins, (Isa. i, 18; xliii, 25). I will forgive their

iniquity and I will remember their sins no more. In those days and in that time saith the Lord the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for and there shall be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found for I will pardon them whom I reserve (Jer. xxxi, 34; l, 20). I will sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean from all your filthiness; and from all your idols I will cleanse you, Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. What language can be more expressive, absolute and unequivocal than this. If sin is represented by uncleanness it is washed away, if as a debt it is blotted out, if as a charge it can not be found, it is sunk into the bottom of the sea, out of sight, out of memory, in oblivion. This pardon the gospel reveals. As it is full it includes all sins, as it is free it encourages all sinners, the poor, the blind, the halt, the lame, the wretched, the chief. As it is everlasting it gives the greatest peace to the soul assured that it will never be reversed nor recalled, and whatever abuse the impenitent sinner may make of it is holy in all its nature, ten-

dency and effects because it comes from an infinitely Holy God. It has then every requisite suitable to the wants of sinful men, the most sinful. O, let us adore God for such pardon for us wretched sinners even the chief. What can more clearly display his beneficence and good will to man than redemption through the blood of his own dear Son, and what can display our gratitude more than a hearty and honest endeavor to proclaim on highest and sweetest notes the praises of redeeming love, "If holy Angels on their lofty thrones in glory desire" to look into the mystery of redemption by God incarnate "well may we who are the objects of such unprecedented love raise our grateful hearts to the God of Heaven and shout forth in language like this, glory to God in the highest for such peace and good will toward men."

CHAPTER IV.

THE NECESSITY OF PARDON

"Those holy gates forever bar
Pollution, sin and shame
And none shall gain admittance there
But followers of the Lamb."

Since all have sinned and come short of the glory of God *all* need pardon in order to obtain happiness. All of every age or condition, the vile sinner, the strict moralist, the fallen believer, the rich and the poor, bond and free, male and female, the careless at ease in Zion, the gay and fashionable, polite to man, to God most rude, all need it. Money will not procure pardon nor the gift of the Holy Ghost, nor a passport to Heaven. It will scarcely be denied that the unrenewed in heart, stained with the blackest crimes, need forgiveness, covered with crime they can not stand in judgment. If the righteous scarcely be saved where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear. But there are others in a

state of nature as infants, and moralists, and nominal professors, about whom there may be some doubt and dispute. That they also need pardon is evident from the fact that all are by nature children of wrath and heirs of Hell, shapen in iniquity, conceived in sin, death has passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. Death is the wages of sin and we know not how this penalty can be inflicted by a righteous God on infants if they are innocent and in no way affected by sin. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? But it would not be right for him to punish an innocent being. Far be it from him to do so, and far be it from us to charge him with such injustice. Then there seems to be no alternative left but to admit that they are sinners standing in need of forgiveness, and that those of them that are saved are saved through the pardoning mercy of God. That the moralist needs it, appears from the fact that morality is not religion. There are many that neither know or believe the gospel who come under this class and to the shame of Christians, their lives are often

more exemplary. Though they omit what the laws requires, they abstain from what it forbids, are strictly honest, kind, obliging, amiable and every thing that is commendable among men. But like the young man in the gospel who had kept the commandments externally from his youth up and was not far from the kingdom of heaven, they lack one thing, true love to God. They still carry about with them the old corrupt nature, a body of death, a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Go a step further and view those who make a mere nominal profession of religion, perhaps the most scriptural profession in the world. Clad with this holy garb bound on with the girdle of self-righteousness and pride of heart, they in supercilious disdain say to others stand by for I am holier than thou, we alone are left to serve God in purity of word and doctrine, all others are bowing the knee to the image of Baal. The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these. They are the people and wisdom will die with them and

religion too! After all they are only outer court worshipers, having only a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. They have a name to live whilst dead in God's account. They are like the Scribes and Pharisees who went the round of external duty and were held in great esteem as the best expositors of the law and the brighest paterns of morality; but were inwardly ravenous wolves—whited sepulchres. Here is the fatal rock on which thousands make shipwreck of their faith. Building their hopes of glory on the sandy foundation of external forms of religion and lives exempt from open crime and having a form of godliness but denying the power. They think all is well, that they are whole needing no physician, that they are just needing no repentance, no pardon. But who will say they do not need them all. Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish.

But the fallen and even the standing believer needs the *renewed* manifestation of pardon. This is true, especially of those who have fallen by their iniquity. Though the

power of sin is broken in the believer its existence still remains to the end of life, and is like the Canaanites with iron chariots, that remained in the land after the general conquest, as scourges in the sides and thorns in the eyes of Israel, and could not be entirely subdued but would dwell in that land, yet they were under tribute (Judges i, 19, 27). The remains of depravity, in the best of men is called, in scripture style, the old man with his deeds which are corrupt, the flesh lusting against the spirit, the law in the members warring against the law of the mind, the body of death under which they groan. That this does overcome and annoy them appears from Abraham's prevarication, Noah's drunkenness, Lot's incest, Joseph's profanity, the Israelite's idolatry, David's adultery and murder, Solomon's polygamy and sin by outlandish women, Peter's denial of his Lord and Master, and Paul's complaints of a law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin, which was in his members. These falls of believers to the discredit of re-

ligion, the wounding of their conscience and the rejoicing of the enemy, were not only after conversion,but also after signal mercies, after Abraham's call, Noah's preservation, Lot's escape, Joseph's promotion, the Israelites' deliverance, and at the foot of Sinai, David's exaltation, Solomon's wisdom, Peter's communion and warning, and Paul's complaints were after his conversion. Alas what is man, what are the best of men, when left to themselves, but feeble erring creatures. There is no man that liveth here and sinneth not, if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. In me says Paul, that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing; and says David, if thou Lord shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand. These falls arise from corrupt nature, prevailing sin, the power of temptation, custom, society, evil communications, self-confidence, the want of vigilance and prayer for restraining grace, the suspension of the Spirit's operations and the dormant state of grace in the soul. They are permitted in divine sovereignty to show man his dependence

and frailty, and to warn those who think they stand to take heed lest they fall. But though fallen they are not lost, though cast down they are not destroyed. They do not fall *totally and finally* from a state of grace, a just man falleth seven times and riseth up again, though he fall he shall not be cast down utterly, (Prov. xxiv, 16; Ps. xxxvii, 24), for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand. They shall never perish, none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hands, they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, the prodigal will arise and go to his father, deeply deploring his sin, the lost sheep will be found and brought back with rejoicing, being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. They are born again of the incorruptible seed of the word, which liveth and abideth forever, the spirit of truth whom the world can not receive, dwells in them, and shall be in them, and abide with them forever, and never be utterly taken away (John xiv, 16, 17; Ps. li,11). This prayer of

David in his fallen state implies that the Holy Spirit was not taken away, too much has been done for them to be done in vain. They are bought at too dear a rate, Christ has purchased them with his own blood and prayed for them that their faith fail not, and that where he is there may they be also to behold his glory. He has prepared mansions of bliss for them, entered as their forerunner, and taken possession in their name,and promised to come again and receive them to himself. They are brought into covenant with God, and that covenant secures their return, their pardon, their final perseverance and eternal happiness. The purpose or counsel of God, the nature of the covenant of grace, the fact that Jesus has paid the price of their redemption, and that he intercedes for them, and that the Holy Spirit possesses their souls, all proves the final perseverance of the saints. God's counsel shall stand and he will do all his pleasure (Isa. xlvi, 10). This covenant of peace shall not be removed. He is well pleased for the righteousness' sake of his own son who ever liveth to make intercession for

us and whom he hears always (John xiv, 16, 19; 17). The Holy Spirit seals their title to life and is the earnest of their inheritance (Eph. i, 13, 14). An earnest is a part given for the security of the whole. Well then may we enquire who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all this, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. Whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified (Rom. 8).

But to the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, it is objected that it encourages licentiousness. It is said that if the believer can not fall totally and finally, he may indulge in sin, for he is sure to be brought back and pardoned, and saved at last: yea, the more he sins the more will grace shine in his salvation according to the principle that where sin abounded grace did much more abound. In reply we say that the man who would thus sin and turn the

grace of God into lasciviousness, has great reason to fear that he has never experienced that grace in his heart; for the grace of God which bringeth salvation teaches us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. Faith works by love, and purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. The sorrow of the world works death, but godly sorrow works repentance to salvation, works carefulness, clearing of ourselves, indignation, fear, vehement desire, zeal, revenge on sin (2 Cor. vii, 10, 11). Hence love to God, purity of heart and life and revenge on sin are the fruits of grace and its doctrines. Paul anticipates and indignantly repels this objection. What? shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein (Rom. vi, 1, 2). How shall we continue in sin, how shall we do this great wickedness, and sin against God, how shall we who have just escaped from chains and slavery voluntarily return to them again? How shall we act

contrary to nature, contrary to all of God that is in us, and around us and before us. How shall we who have just escaped from the servitude and tyranny of a foreign nation go back of our own accord into bondage and serve our enemies? Is it in the breast of any man to do so and choose slavery rather than liberty, death rather than life? Nay, all cry give me liberty or give me death. So how is it in the nature of a child of God just escaped from the most abject slavery, to go again of his own accord into it and serve his worst enemies, because he is to be eventually restored to the glorious liberty of the sons of God? Indeed it is absurd to say that a man will act in this unnatural way. Nature will act out itself whether it be in the old or the new man, and sin is to the believer such a frightful, hateful monster that if there were no Glorified Saviour to see, no hell to shun and no happy shores of glory to gain he *would* not commit, much less continue in it: seeing we have purified our hearts in obeying the truth through the Spirit, we hate every false and wicked way and love

God's holy law. Continuance in sin is contrary to a life of faith, and to live in sin knowingly, willfully and designedly, and indulge in it, that grace may abound is to turn the grace of God into laciviousness, and is contrary to the nature, and desire, and conduct of the believer, as well as to the scriptures: yet some eminent saints have been overcome by sin and continued for a time under its influence. Peter soon recovered from his dreadful sin in denying his Lord thrice and with an oath. But David, who went astray like a lost sheep, must have continued under the stupifying power of sin for nearly a year, before he was aroused and restored by the scathing parable of the Lord's messenger. And what shall we say of Solomon who lived for many years in sin, probably from manhood till he passed the meridian of life, from the time he married so many wives who caused him to sin, there is no evidence of his repentance and reformation till it appears in his Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, written in his advanced years. These books bear the marks of a true penitent. The

vanity of the world, the character of sin, and of her whose house is the way to hell, the warnings and exhortations there given to all and the conclusion of the whole matter, to fear God and keep his commandments is the language of one who has seen the evil of his ways and turned to the Lord for pardon and reconciliation. Some deny that Solomon was ever restored and saved, and we admit the evidence is not so express and clear as could be desired. But when we remember that he is called Jedidiah, which signifies beloved of his God, and that among many nations there was no king like him who was beloved of his God (2 Sam. xii, 25; Neh. xiii, 26), and take this in connexion with the fact that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance, that whom he loves he loves unto the end, we think there is sufficient evidence to warrant the belief that Solomon was renewed again to repentance, pardoned and saved, after his long and fearful apostacy and sin. Sin aggravated by being done after God had appeared unto him twice and given him wisdom, and

riches, and honor above all kings that were before him and that will be after him (1 Kings xiv, 9; 35; ix, 2). Moreover God said I will be his father and he will be my son, and I will not take my mercy away from him (1 Chron. xvii, 13). If it be admitted that he was once beloved of God as his people are, it must also be admitted that he was restored and saved, or that God is changeable in his love which is not true, but is contrary to what he says of his people, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfullness to fail, the Lord will not cast off forever." Whilst we maintain the final perseverance of the saints we do not maintain that men will be saved if they have once believed although they live as they list, but that believers will persevere in holiness unto the end. We hold out no hope to those who are resolved to walk contrary to God. But while sin thus prevails over the believer he is not in his element. He is like Samson with his locks shorn and eyes put out, like

the Israelites in Babylon and the captive in his chains, restless, longing, struggling for liberty. He cries, how long wilt thou forget me, O Lord! forever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me, and when wilt thou come unto me? Remember me I pray thee, and strengthen me I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines, for my two eyes (Judges xvi, 28).

CHAPTER V.

ENCOURAGEMENTS TO SEEK PARDON.

All are *encouraged* to seek pardon,—the young and the old in sin,—the comparatively holy, and the notoriously wicked,—and the believer, though far and long backslidden from his father's house, till he has wasted his

substance, and begins to be in want. They are *encouraged by the institutions of religious worship*, by the invitations, promises and requirements of the gospel, by the nature of God, the gift of his Son, and the atonement he has made, by the provisions of the covenant of grace, and by the examples of those that have been pardoned. Among these are sinners of all grades, from the lowest to the highest, the chief before and after conversion. The institutions of religious worship, together with the organization of the church, are designed for the conversion and salvation of sinners. They are brought into the church, which is Christ's body, by the ministry of the word and sacraments, the instrumentality of men and the agency of the Holy Spirit. It has pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. Ministers are ambassadors for Christ, beseeching and praying sinners in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God, who of his own will begets them with the word of truth that they should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures. The gospel treasure is put in earthen vessels, that the ex-

cellency of the power may be of God and not of us. Whoever waters, it is God that gives the increase and builds up the church, not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit saith the Lord; and of Zion it shall be said, this and that man were born in her. When Manoah said to his wife we shall surely die because we have seen God, his wife said unto him if the Lord were pleased to kill us he would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands (Judges xiii, 23). This shows that the design of religious worship is to accept, through the merits of the great Atoning Sacrifice, the persons and services of sinners. Baptism and the Lord's Supper are instituted for the express purpose of granting pardon. John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; and in the first institution of the Lord's Supper, Jesus said of the cup, this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for the remission of sins (Mark i, 4; Matt· xxvi, 28). The *invitations, promises and requirements of the gospel* are made to sinners *as such*, irrespective of age ,or sex, or

condition, or nation. God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that fears Him and works righteousness, is accepted of Him. The young, are particularly invited to seek the Lord and remember their Creator in the days of their youth, and the old are not excluded; for he hires laborers in his vineyard, from early in the morning till the eleventh hour of the day (Matt. 20). Men are not invited because they are holy, or rich, and wise, and honorable, or have done some good deeds, and have some prerequisite qualifications, but as destitute of all good. Every one is required to forgive from the heart if he would be forgiven by God,—to freely forgive as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us. The scriptures show the character of those, to whom the invitations and promises are made; and that these are as broad as the sentence of the law which declares the soul that sinneth, it shall die. In his word, God says, Unto you, O, men, I call, and my voice is to the sons of man. Ho, every one that thirsteth come ye to the waters. Look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth.

Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, and far from righteousness; come now and let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God for he will abundantly pardon (Isa. i, 18; xlv, 22; xlvi, 12; lv, 7). As I live saith the Lord I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways, for why will ye die? (Ezk. xxxiii. 11.) Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest (Matt. xi, 28). Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out (John vi, 37). Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, the maimed the halt, and the blind; go out in to the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. Go out and bring in hither sinners of all grades; compel them to

come in. The kingdom of heaven is like a net that gathered of every kind (Matt. xiii, 47; Luke xiv, 21, 23). Ye see your calling brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are, that no flesh should glory in his presence (1 Cor. i, 26–29). To God's backslidden people, he says, O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquities. I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely (Hos. 14). Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return again to me, saith the Lord (Jer. iii, 2). Even from the days of your fathers, ye are gone away from mine ordinances and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of hosts (Mal. iii, 7).

Though ye have lain among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver and her feathers with yellow gold, (Ps. lxviii, 13). I will cleanse you from all your iniquity; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. Ask, and it shall be given you, seek, and ye shall find (Matt. vii, 7). O, what exceeding great and precious promises are given us, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature. Who are not included in them? O sinner, whoever, and whatever you are, they are given to you, and to me, and to all who hear the gospel; and O, may God in his infinite mercy give us grace to receive them in love.

The *nature of God, the gift of his Son to a lost world and the atonement* he has made, *encourage all* to seek pardon. In nature he is long suffering, slow to anger, ready to forgive, waiting to be gracious, delighting in mercy. In him compassions flow, and with him the fatherless find mercy. The inspired penman assures us that he "is long suffering and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity

and transgression. He proclaimed his name the Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and sin. Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness. He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy; his mercy is above the heavens and it endureth forever (Numb. xiv, 18). He exercises loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth" (Jer. ix, 24; Ex. xxxiv, 67; Neh. ix, 17; Mich. vii, 18; Ps. ciii, 8; 13).

"The Lord our God is merciful
and he is gracious,
Long suffering, and slow to wrath,
in mercy plenteous.

He will not chide continually,
nor keep his anger still.
With us he dealt not as we sinn'd
nor did requite our ill.

For as the heaven in its height
the earth surmounteth far:
So great to those that do him fear
his tender mercies are;

As far as east is distant from
the west, so far hath he
From us removed, in his love,
all our iniquity."

The whole earth is full of his goodness which is manifested in our creation, preservation and redemption. He has made us so that nature and our various senses are instruments of pleasure, instead of pain; whereas, if he intended our misery how easily could he have accomplished it by making us a terror to ourselves and to all around us, by making "every thing we tasted bitter, every thing we saw loathsome, every thing we touched a sting, every smell a stench and every sound a discord." How different is it and how great is his goodness which he has laid up for them that fear him. With the utmost care and tenderness, "the Lord preserves all who him love, that nought can them annoy," preserves them at all times, in all places and in all circumstances; the sun shall not smite them by day nor the moon by night. He keeps them as the apple of his eye; he preserves man and beast;

and his tender mercies are over all his works. A sparrow can not fall to the ground without his knowledge. "He sees with equal eye as God of all, a hero perish or a sparrow fall." God is love; and his love is signally displayed in the gift of his Son to perishing sinners He has no pleasure in the death of the wicked; he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. He hates putting away; he so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. O, wonderful, stupendous, unspeakable gift! Would it ever have been given if God had not designed our salvation? Nay. But God commendeth his love towards us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. v, 8). It is by the gift and death of his Son, that he can exercise mercy to the guilty, that he can and does exercise it in consistency with his justice, and the rectitude of his moral government; and only in this way can he be just and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. He is just, as well as merciful, and

he must be so or cease to be a holy and righteous God. "A God all mercy is a God unjust." His law and justice must be vindicated, and Jesus has done this by the atonement he has made. He satisfied divine justice; he magnified the law and made it honorable; he gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, or a sweet smelling savor,—gave himself a ransom for many,—a ransom for all; he died for our sins according to the scriptures; he bore our sins in his own body on the tree, he is the propitiation for our sins; he was made a sin offering for us; and by his death we are reconciled to God; he has redeemed us to God by his own blood. It is by him that we have now received the atonement, and there can be no dispute about its all sufficiency to cleanse from all sin. On this point we can freely adopt the sentiment of Dr. Wardlaw, "Such is my opinion of its sufficiency, that were the guilt of all the millions of mankind that have ever lived concentrated in my own person, I should see no reason, relying on that blood which cleanses from all sin, to indulge despair."

The *provision of the covenant of grace affords* the *same encouragement.* "This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their minds, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they will be my people. I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sin no more. I will make an everlasting covenant with them that I will not turn away from them to do them good but I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me. Yea I will rejoice over them to do them good, with my whole heart and with my whole soul" (Jer. xxxi, 33, 34; xxxii, 40, 41; Heb. viii, 10, 12). This covenant is made with the house of Israel, which is a term signifying all believers, not only all who have, but all who will hereafter believe. It contains provision for all the sins of all believers,—it contains pardon and security, grace and glory,—all that pertains to life and godliness. God engages to regenerate them, pardon their sins, sanctify their natures, preserve them in a state of

grace, glorify them, rejoice over them, to do them good,with his whole heart, and with his whole soul. In a word, he engages to be their God, and take them to be his people. This is taught by the language of the covenant. I will put my law in their mind and write it in their heart, and this language signifies their regeneration; as when he says, a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and this is done when they are dead in trespasses and in sins, unable and unwilling to return to him. Yet it is done in the use of means. I will forgive their iniquity and I will remember their sins no more, teaches that pardon is procured for them by the atonement of Christ, and includes not only their past and present sins, but "secures them against the imputation of the guilt of such sins as they may afterwards commit." As the first principles of holiness or seed of regeneration is sown in them, signified by writing his law in their hearts, so it is watered and cherished for their sanctification. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; the

very God of peace will sanctify them wholly, for he is faithful who hath called them, who also will do it. They are also *preserved* in Christ Jesus. God who rests in his love, is not changeable like man. He engages to not turn away from them to do them good, but to put his fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from him. His covenant of peace shall not be removed (Isa. liv, 10). "Their faith may be feeble, but it shall not utterly fail; their holiness may lose its lustre, but it shall not be extinguished; sin may, occasionally prevail against them, but shall not recover the dominion." The water I shall give him, shall be in him, a well of water springing up into everlasting life (John iv, 14). He will finally glorify them; whom he justified, them he also glorified (Rom. viii, 30). The Lord will give grace and glory (Ps. lxxxiv, 11). The ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away (Isa. xxxv, 10). Such are, briefly, the blessings of this covenant; but as it con-

tains our salvation, let us further say, in accordance with the views of the Rev. Francis Gillies,that it is one of the only two covenants ever made on the part of God, relative to the eternal state and happiness of man. The covenant of works was broken by Adam, the head and representative of his posterity; in consequence of which its blessings were lost; and depravity, guilt, and misery, temporal and spiritual, ensued to the whole human family. But the covenant of grace, that everlasting covenant, well ordered in all things and sure, which is all our salvation and all our desire (2 Sam. xxiii, 5). Was made with Christ the head and representative of his spiritual seed and with them in him and is fulfilled, ratified and sealed by the blood of Jesus, its head, and surety, and administrator, and is the source of holiness, and happiness, and eternal life. Here is their security, the covenant of grace, God himself who engages to see that all believers shall be brought to enjoy all its blessings. It is by way of eminence the *covenant of grace, all of grace,* here the grace of God

reigns. Its end and design are to manifest the exceeding riches of his grace. God was under no necessity of making it with fallen man, guilty and depraved, having no claims on his mercy more than the fallen angels. He is self-existent, perfectly happy, in and of himself, independent of all his creatures and needeth not the services of any, and though all would perish his happiness and glory are not diminished. It is then all of grace containing a cluster of the richest and freest promises, to obtain which, no human merit or prerequisite qualifications are necessary or required. The merits of Christ, his vicarious sufferings and dying for his people are the only proper *conditions* of it. To us it is free and "absolute as the covenant of the seasons with Noah." The character of those in whom it is fulfilled, proves its freeness. They are great sinners, often the oldest and vilest, hell-deserving. It begins at Jerusalem, and publicans and harlots are brought into it, while the Scribes and Pharisees, the decent, and respectable, and moral among men are often left out.

It is a covenant for good, all about doing us good, without a word of wrath, and curse, and deserving punishment. It is from the Author of every good and perfect gift, who will not turn away from doing his people, constant, certain and unlimited good. His word and faithfulness are given that he will not turn away, and that he will not permit them by their own voluntary act to go back to perdition. Whom he loves he loves unto the end. He hates putting away, and he will never leave nor forsake them. His gifts and callings are without repentance. His eyes are on them for good.

Sanctified afflictions are among the greatest blessings, and the richest jewels in their crown. "Even crosses from our Maker's hand are blessings in disguise." They shall work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Though ungrateful for his mercies, though sinful in their enjoyment, though forgetful of the all-bountiful giver, though we often abuse and pervert them to his dishonor and our injury, yet he will not turn away. It is ordered in all

things and sure; and this includes all good, temporal, spiritual and eternal, for the body, the mind and the soul, grace and glory,—all that God can in wisdom give and man receive,—immortality, eternal life, deliverance from the reign of sin, the curse of the law, the tyranny of Satan, the love of the world and the wrath to come,—good before and after conversion, through eternity. O, how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear Thee? It is complete and sure, providing for all on the part of God, and man for his enjoyment of it. Left to ourselves we would just sin on, and if possible disannul the covenant. But he will put his fear in our hearts, that we shall not depart from him totally, and finally; and all our departures, he will overrule for our good. They are kept by his power through faith unto salvation, I will make and who will or can hinder? Neither sin, nor men, and angels, and all the combined powers of the universe. I will make and who will or can unmake it? It is sure and immutable as God himself, vast as the

desires of man, high as heaven, endless as eternity, and made with *believers personally* in the day of their regeneration. It is not then made with all men for many have never heard of its existence, nor had its offer any more than they have heard of a Saviour and had the offer of him in the Gospel. But as to believers, their names are written in it as in the book of life, graven upon the palms of his hands, set as a seal upon his heart and upon his arm, constantly in his eye, borne upon his spirit at all times, in all places, and in all his actions. This fear in their hearts exhibited in a holy life, is the external mark of their interest in it, and this evidence is in *proportion* to their *holiness*. That it is not made with *all* men, nor designed for *all* without *exception*, is evident from the event. It is not made known and offered to all, and all are not saved; and it is begging the question to say that the failure of salvation is owing to man's unbelief, for it is not revealed and offered to all, and how can they believe in Him of whom they have not heard. Besides, God pledges him-

self to secure its blessings to all for whom it was designed, and faith is one of those blessings which he works in them with power. All men, without *exception*, are not included in it more than all angels, and none can find fault, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight;" yet all men, without *distinction*, are included in it, and in taking hold of it, are blessed with a place and a name in God's house—an everlasting name that shall not be cut off; (Isa. lvi. 4, 7,) also the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord, and that take hold of my covenant, even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer, make them pillars in the temple of God, and they shall go no more out. It is holy, called God's holy covenant (Luke i. 72). It preserves and displays the righteousness and holiness of God's government in the salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ. Man's devised plans of salvation, always lower the righteousness, and stain the holiness of God's conduct. They make him infinitely merciful, but not infinitely holy and just.

But here, the infinite holiness and justice of God appear. He is just, and yet the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. It also secures the personal holiness of all brought into it. God promises to put his fear into their hearts; that is, all holy principles and right dispositions, by which their holiness is secured—infallibly secured. Holiness is a beauty of this covenant, at the remembrance of which, the believer gives thanks. Nor is holiness the condition of taking hold, or entering into it. Men are chosen, not because they *are* holy, but tha they *should* be holy, and without blame before him in love. This holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord, is secured to them by his invisible, and unerring, and almighty hand. It is everlasting. The deprivation of its blessings after tasting their sweetness, would torture and agonize the soul, in proportion to its sense of the loss sustained. But it is everlasting, perpetual, constant, immutable, unfading, unending; be-

cause its condition is fulfilled by the Son, and accepted by the Father, whose faithfulness will secure its blessings, and its perpetuity. The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee. Its perpetuity does not depend on our works, or merits, or the work of grace in our hearts, or it would fail; but on the Lord our righteousness, and resting on this Rock of Ages, it is stable and eternal as the throne of God. "All else is sand," but this "will outlive death and the judgment, survive the wreck of the world, and run parallel with eternity." Faith is the only way of entering into the enjoyment of it. It is the covenant of promise, and all that is necessary to the enjoyment of a free promise, is simply to receive and rely on it. This is the part which faith acts. It receives and rests on Christ, and the promises in him. Faith is part of the good of this covenant, to be done to us. It is God's gift, of his operation; and Christ's righteousness is the

only proper condition of it. Any thing else would destroy the grace of it, and make it a modified covenant of works. But it is all of grace, or all of works, otherwise grace is no more grace, or works are no more works. It is freely offered, and must be so received by all who would enjoy its blessings—free as the air, or the light of the sun; and work or merit on our part, would mutilate, nullify and subvert it. We are blessed not *for* taking, but *in* receiving it. We must receive it not as laborers claim and receive wages due, but as beggars receive alms. It is then of faith, that it might be by grace, and sure to all the seed, (Romans iv. 16). Moreover, all true covenanting, consists in taking hold of this covenant by an act of lively appropriating faith in God, or true believing in Jesus. Our covenanting will be just in proportion to our faith. Covenants of duty by which men bind themselves to discharge all religious duties, are built on this covenant. Men may write them out and sign them with their own blood, but all is vain without genuine, appropriating faith in

Christ Jesus; and as often as we act faith in him, we covenant with God. Here is the sinner's encouragement and the believer's security. It secures his pardon and final happiness, and shows that though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down. It is not falling into the mire, but lying there, that destroys men: it is not falling into sin, but continuing in it, that destroys the soul eternally. Then lay hold of God's covenant: acquaint now thyself with him and be at peace; thereby good shall come to thee.

The examples of those who have been pardoned, encourage all to seek forgiveness. Among these, are found the chief of sinners, some before and some after conversion; as Noah, Lot, David, Solomon, the Israelites, Manasseh, Mary Magdalene, Peter, Paul, the Corinthians, and the murderers of our Lord. Lot and Peter are instances of relapses into the same sin, the Israelites and Solomon, of repeated acts and long continuance in sin. They tempted God these ten times; oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert: turned

back, tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel: from the days of their fathers, from their youth unto this day they forsook him; but being full of compassion he forgave their iniquity, (Num. xiv., Ps. lxxviii., Jer. iii.) Mary Magdalene, out of whom were cast seven devils, and the Corinthians, are examples of unchaste and scandalous sinners, and also the publicans and harlots, (Luke vii., 1 Cor. vi. 9, 11). Manasseh, and Paul, and the murderers of Jesus Christ are instances of the chief of sinners. Know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, for the promise is to you. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day, were added unto them, about three thousand souls, some of whom had imbued their hands in the blood of Christ. (Acts ii.) Paul says he

was a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious,—persecuted them (the saints) unto the death—persecuted them often in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them I persecuted them even unto strange cities. But I obtained mercy: the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. Howbeit for *this* cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might show forth all long suffering, for a *pattern* to them which should hereafter believe on him, to life everlasting. What a pattern of pardon. (1 Tim. i. 13, 16.) As to Manasseh, he was guilty of every thing that is bad—guilty of the greatest sins, for which no sacrifice was provided under the law, and against which there was express warning that those guilty of them should be put to death, especially the idolater, the murderer, and those who sacrificed their children to idols, and consulted evil spirits, witches, wizards, etc.; for which the

kingdom was rent from Saul, and he rejected by God, whom he thus denied. (Lev. xviii. 21; xx. 2, 6; Deu. iv. 18, 10, 11). But contrary to all this he sold himself, like Ahab, to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord. He destroyed, as far as possible, the true religion, by raising up altars unto Baal, making groves and worshiping all the host of heaven. He was guilty of idolatry, and profaned the house of God with his idols, and sacrificed his children to idols; which sin filled up the measure of the iniquity of God's people, (Ezek. xvi. 20,): he was in league with Satan, and observed times, and used enchantment and witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards: he shed much innocent blood—the blood of the saints and prophets, of fathers, mothers and children, (2 Kings xxi. 16,): he did much evil in the sight of the Lord like the abominations of the heathen, and caused God's people to sin even worse than the heathen; and after his sins he would not hearken to divine admonitions and reproofs,—worse than the abominations of the heathen, among which were idolatry, adultery, fornication,

incest, sodomy, bestiality, sins that are the perpetual reproach of human nature. (Lev. xviii.) These are some of his sins, and yet after all, he besought the Lord and obtained mercy. (1, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13). Who then need despair: your case may not be like Manesseh's, Noah's, Lot's, David's, the Corinthians', etc., but for all sorts of sins and sinners there is forgiveness with God; and there are those in heaven who have been guilty of them. May we be added to that happy number who are forgiven.

But there is a time to seek and obtain: now is the accepted time—now is the day of salvation: to-morrow may be too late: the ark may be closed: this night your soul may be required. There is one case on record of a sinner saved at the eleventh hour, that none may despair, and but one, that none may presume to delay this important duty.

"Be wise to day, 'tis madness to defer,
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;
Thus on, till wisdom is pushed out of life.
Procrastination is the thief of time.
Year after year it steals till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene."

Then seek without delay: seek with all your heart and might: the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. Strive to enter in at the strait gate, for many shall seek to enter in and shall not be able. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest. The divine command, the brevity and uncertainty of life, and the importance of the work,—all demand this exertion. Seek in the use of the means of grace by prayer and supplication: take with you words and say, Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously: pardon mine iniquity for it is great. Seek in faith, and love, relying on the promises, and divine aid: seek with importunity, in the language and spirit of the patriarch, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me."

But it is objected that wilful sinners and backsliders can not be forgiven, "for if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no

more sacrifice for sins." (Heb. x. 26). We reply that this text does not refer to all wilful sining, for the best of men sin wilfully, that is, with the consent of their will. Peter, and others already noticed, sinned with their own consent, even after they had received the knowledge of the truth, and yet were forgiven. It then refers to a wilful and obstinate course of sinning, or to the rejection of Christ and the doctrine of salvation by him. After men have professed the great truth, that Jesus is the only Saviour of sinners, and yet, against all evidence, all the light and convictions of their consciences, they deny this truth, and obstinately presist in the denial of it, seeing there is no more, no other sacrifice for sin, no other Saviour, nor any salvation by any other way: " there is no hope—no help for them, for they shut themselves out from all hope, and all help. Again, " it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, if they

shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance." (Heb. vi. 4, 6). This passage and the former have been a stone of stumbling to many, and an occasion of much trouble to many a true believer, who has fallen by his iniquity; and though the backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways, let us place in opposition to this passage, God's promise to his backslidden people—"I will heal their backslidings, I will love them freely." (Hos. xiv.) And the fact that he has renewed and healed many who have fallen, after they were enlightened or converted, and then what becomes of the objection. Does it not fall, and show that any passage taken by itself will prove almost anything? The passage is hypothetical; that is, on the supposition that they shall fall away—fall totally and finally. But God has engaged to put his fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from him in this way." (Jer. xxxii. 40.) Now, admiting that the person here spoken of has been converted or enlightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, etc., and after all this, has

fallen away from these great and rare attainments, though it may not be possible with men and with the ordinary means of grace to renew him yet with the extraordinary means, and with God it is possible, for with God all things are possible—all things that are agreeable to his nature. But it is agreeable to his nature to save sinners, and to renew those that have fallen after conversion, as appears from his promises and renewing acts in the case of fallen believers already noticed. As it is not from an isolated passage, but from the analogy of faith; that is, the agreement of one part of scripture with another that our views are to be established; so this text may be explained by a parallel one. (Mat. xix. 24, 26; Mk x. 25, 27). It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. To the disciples, astonished out of measure at this saying, and inquiring who then can be saved, Jesus said, with men it is impossible but not with God, for with God all things are possible. It is possible with him to save

a rich man as well as a poor one. It is possible with him to renew those who were once enlightened, but are now fallen, as well as to renew those who were never enlightened, nor fallen into any sin, nor from any attainment. Who then will limit the Holy One of Israel, but those who deny that it is not possible with him to renew and save the vilest sinner, and the greatest apostate? Merciful Father, wilt thou not heal our backslidings and love us freely? Wilt thou not revive us again that we may rejoice in thee: show us thy mercy and grant us thy salvation?

The objection also falls, when we see that there is nothing said in this passage or any similar one, as in Ezek. xviii. 2; Pet. xx. 21, but what may be said of or found in the unregenerate. They are enlightened; so are all who hear the gospel, and hence have no cloak for their sin—they are partakers of the Holy Ghost; so are all who have the common influences, or the extraordinary gifts of the spirit, by which they have prophesied, and cast out devils, and done many wonder-

ful works, yet were unregenerate. (Mat. vii. 22, 23). They have tasted the good word of God; so did the stony ground hearers, and yet had no root in themselves. The terms—partakers of the heavenly gift, and of the powers of the world to come, are expressions doubtful in their meaning, and so can furnish no legitimate argument. Conjecture proves nothing, much less does it prove what our opponents desire. It then seems to us that the objection vanishes, and that the sinner who goes astray, even with his own consent, may be sought out by the Great Shepherd of the sheep, renewed again to repentance, pardoned and brought back with rejoicing.

CHAPTER VI.

RELIEF OBTAINED.

A *believing discovery of pardon, is the only relief for an awakened sinner.* Various are the expedients to which men resort to relieve their distressed souls from the

burden of sin. They attempt to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord, as did Adam among the trees of the garden, or like Cain, go into another land and build a city; or like the nations after the flood, build a tower whose top may reach unto heaven; or like Saul, reject the word of the Lord and have recourse to witchery and enchantment, (clairvoyance, etc.,) for which he was rejected from being king, (1 Sam. xv. 23); or like Judas, in a fit of despair, take away their own lives. The Israelites went to the Assyrians for help, (Hos. xiv). The heathen torture, lacerate and sacrifice themselves to appease the anger of their deities. The unfortunate vassals of Popery do penance, take many a long and weary pilgrimage, and submit to any sacrifice and debasement that may be required by the "man of sin." Some attempt to drown their sorrow by the intoxicating bowl, and scenes of revelry and debauchery. They sacrifice to Bacchus, the god of wine, chanting their silly ode, "drink boys, drink, and drown all sorrow;" others resort to the giddy

whirlpool of pleasure, and vain society, and theatrical plays; they invent to themselves instruments of music, they take the timbrel and harp, and chant to the sound of the viol. Again, some make an external reformation; perform deeds of charity and benevolence; endow some religious institution; flatter themselves that they are as good as their neighbors, and thus go about to establish their own righteousness, by which they expect to atone for all the ills they have done, and so *obtain* heaven. But these are all devices of the natural man, who, enquiring wherewith shall I come before the Lord, expects, by his own merits, to appease the Most High, and pluck the crown of life from Jehovah's hands. By these, and similar expedients, their minds may be somewhat diverted from the burden of their souls, but they are not relieved. The burden still remains. All these are indeed miserable comforters, and broken reeds that will at last pierce them through with many sorrows. There is still "poison in the drunkard's cup, and worse than poignards in the harlot's

embrace." Still the rankling thorn sticks fast in their hearts, and their wounds bleed afresh from every pore. They can not make amends for the past, nor atone for the present. At last, renouncing all these vain helps, and self too,—that oldest and foulest idol,—they cry, what must I do to be saved? and never, till they believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, can they find relief and salvation; never, till they apprehend, by faith, the mercy of God in Christ flowing to them though the chief of sinners, can they find rest to their distressed souls. Hence, faith and repentance too, and confession and patience, are necessary to the enjoyment of pardon, and to overcoming the obstacles in the way of this enjoyment. A believing discovery of pardon through Jesus Christ removes the thorn and burden, and gives that peace, which all the expedients, and pleasures, and honors, and riches, and powers of the world, can never afford. Being justified by faith we have peace with God. Take for example the Philippian jailor trembling and enquiring what must I do to be saved? The answer

is, not to try any of the above or similar expedients, but "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Then he rejoiced, believing in God, and was at rest. Jesus is the glorious *object* of faith, and the word of Him who can not lie is the *ground* of faith. We believe many things on testimony, and here we believe on the testimony of God, and not of man, nor of our own senses. Faith is the gift of God, expressed in scripture by believing, coming, looking, eating, resting on Christ. "Look unto me, and be ye saved," says he; and believing, we reply, "Behold we come unto thee for thou art the Lord our God." He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life. Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out, says Jesus; and he that eateth with me even he shall live by me. Coming to Christ, and believing on him, are the same thing, and in coming to him by faith we renounce all sin, self righteousness, houses, lands, and all that would hinder us. We can not serve two masters, Christ and Belial, nor "stay in Sodom and set foot in

Zoar." But in coming we do not wait till we are free from sin, or till we have even "renounced the love of it," for then we would never come to the Lord Jesus Christ for pardon. But we come as we are, sinners, and at the same time renounce all sin, breaking our league with death and our agreement with hell. Coming and renouncing are inseparable, as the sun and his light. Believing and coming are the same. He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst, (John vi. 35). But *faith* and *sense*, or the *assurance of sense*, are different things. We walk by faith, not by sight (2 Cor. v. 7). Blessed are they who have not seen and yet believe. Hence that may be believed which is not seen, felt or experienced. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God (Isa. l. 10). This man fears the Lord, and obeys the voice of his servant and is then a believer. Abraham, against hope,

believed in hope. In the promise of a son there was nothing external for sense to rest on, but every thing to oppose it; yet he staggered not at the promise, through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God and being fully persuaded that what he had promised he was able also to perform (Rom. iv. 18, 21). He was fully persuaded, was assured, and this assurance which belongs to the nature of saving faith, must be distinguished from the assurance of sense, or from the knowledge of our being believers. The assurance of faith arises from "the single view of what is contained in the word of promise, but the assurance of sense arises from the joint view of God's word without us and from his work within us," from the Holy Spirit shining on his own work in the soul, from self examination, and the marks of grace in our hearts and lives. "The assurance of sense is founded on evidences, and supposes actual progress in holiness;" the assurance of faith is founded on the word of God. Faith and doubts are antagonists, yet doubts

and complaints of desertion and of prevailing iniquity may be in the believer. Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Iniquities prevail against me, says David; and Jesus said to Peter, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt (Isa. xlix. 14; Ps. lxv. 3; Mat. xiv. 31)? We do not say that a person is required by the gospel, "in the first instance, to believe that Christ died for him," or that he is one of the elect and pardoned, but he is required to believe that the gospel is preached to him and Christ therein offered to him in particular. The father of the child cried out and said with tears, Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief (Mk. ix. 24). To you is the word of this salvation sent; the promise is to you, to you who have crucified the Lord of glory (Acts iii. 36, 39). This he is "required to believe while yet he has no sensible evidence that Christ is his in possession;" required to believe that Christ is made sin for us, delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification; that he is offered to sinners, and hence

to him, a sinner. The promise of pardon and eternal life is made to sinners hearing the gospel, irrespective of age, sex, nation, condition or moral worth; made to sinners as such even the chief; to all that hear it; to the stout hearted and far from righteousness; to the vilest of the vile (Isa. xliii. 24, 25; xlvi. 12; xlix. 6; Ezk. xxxvi. 26; Jno. vi. 32, 33; 1st Jno. v. 11). The promise, or the gospel is broad as the law. But the law includes all. The soul that sinneth it shall die; cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them. So the promise of the gospel is to all sinners "not as having experienced the work of grace in them, but as destitute of it;" to the stout hearted and far from righteousness; to the outcasts and those that are ready to perish. Then, in exercising the direct act of faith on the promise of pardon, of life and salvation, we do not wait for any recommendation in ourselves, nor for the *sensible* assurance of faith; but we apply to ourselves Christ and salvation made over to us in the free, unconditional offer of the

gospel, and this faith the believer exercises even "under a sense of extreme guiltiness;" though destitute and undone in himself he is persuaded that in the Lord Jesus Christ he has righteousness; that he is the propitiation for his sins, and that his blood will cleanse him from them all, be they ever so great. Zaccheus, the Samaritan woman, the Philippian jailor, and the thief on the cross, are instances of persons pardoned without previous qualifications recommending them to God's mercy. None need wait till he experiences the work of the spirit, or some good qualifications in himself, before he applies the promises, for the promise is to all *as* sinners, and "all genuine experience of the work of grace is after believing." For example, a king promises pardon to a rebel or to a class of rebellious subjects, and they, trusting in his word do not, nor are they required to wait till they experience some good in themselves, worthy of pardon, before they apply the promise, and receive the benefit of it. So God, the King of kings, promises his rebellious subjects pardon and

eternal life through his Son, and those that believe his word of promise do not wait, nor are they required to wait till they experience some good in themselves, or a change of heart before they receive and apply the proffered blessings. That the soul be relieved from fear and punishment, it is necessary that the application of the gospel be as broad and particular as the law in condemning, and he that makes the application says, Christ is my righteousness, my peace, my hope, my all. No person has a spiritual view of the grace and mercy of God in Christ, who does not see them extending to himself in particular, though the chief of sinners ; and such only, have a heart to mortify sin and live to God. Many persons distressed by sin, and not finding in themselves the sensible assurance of faith, are, under a mistaken view of the gospel, often fearing to appropriate Christ to themselves. But they are looking for the fruit of faith before they believe—for the effect before the cause. They are looking to something within them, and not to the word of promise, for a war-

rant to receive and appropriate Christ Jesus. But it must be evident that it is not our experience, excellence, condition &c. but the free gift and grant of Christ in the gospel, that gives us a warrant to appropriate him to ourselves. That, would be to subvert the gospel plan of salvation; for, if we could produce this excellence in us before coming to Christ, what would be the necessity of coming at all, and would we not *thus* be our own saviour? Then, the free offer of Christ in the gospel, is our warrant to receive and appropriate him to ourselves. Our excellence, good frames, and all such things are naught but sand and stubble. *The assurance of faith is different from the sensible assurance, or the assurance that we have believed in a right manner*—that Christ is already ours in possession. The former may exist without the latter, which may be, or not be, according to God's pleasure, as it is not essential to our interest in Christ, or to pardon. Our comfort depends on it, but our safety does not. Perhaps it will not do to be entrusted with it, just as it will not do for some men to

be entrusted with their wages, till their time of service is done. A true believer may follow God long—perhaps ten, twenty or thirty years, or a life time, before he obtains the sensible assurance of faith and pardon. It may cost another many prayers offered up with strong crying and tears, before he obtains it. By the raging waves of temptation and sin he is driven almost from the anchor of hope, yet he still cleaves to God and cries why castest thou off my soul—why hidest thou thy face from me, I am afflicted and ready to die from my youth up, while I suffer thy terrors I am distracted (Ps. 88). Why hast thou forgotten me, why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy (Ps. 42). Strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die. A person may have faith, without sense, peace and joy, as they are not essential to salvation. "Faith, is the spring of obedience. Duties, without faith, are legal—their principle, is legal fear—their end, is legal righteousness—their aim, is to quiet conscience, and appease God" in this way, and not by the righteousness of his

own beloved Son. Even the obedience of faith, must not be brought to mingle with Christ's righteousness. Pardon, through Christ, must be accepted as a free gift, and not obtained, partly by works, as a price. We must believe that God, for Christ's sake, freely pardons all our sins, and then go on, in active, and holy obedience, without complaining, as did Zion and Jacob—Why hast thou forgotten me—my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God. It is not complaints, and indolence, and desires, but great exertion, and diligence, that, under the divine blessing, crowns us with success. The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent, take it by force; and besides this giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue (Mat. xi. 12. 2 Pet. i. 5).

The obstacles to be overcome, require this exertion and diligence. These arise from the inflexibility of the divine law and justice—from the enormity of sin—from relapses into sin—from the voice of conscience—from a sense of ingratitude for great favors receiv-

ed—from unbelief—from apprehensions of temporal judgments, and fears of being utterly cast away—from sins, after a sense of God's love and special mercies—after wanderings, after vows, and engagements to duty. They arise from sins, that waste the conscience, and bring reproach on religion, and that are committed against knowledge, light and love—from afflictions, that seem to be peculiar to them, as the loss of property, of friends, of reputation, and from presecution—from strong corruptions, and indwelling sin—love of the world, and of reputation—from the temptations of Satan, also, from their darkness about the state and operations of their souls, for they complain, that they can tell neither the time nor place of their conversion; and, unless a man be born again, he can not enter into the kingdom of God. They say, this evil comes from the Lord, why should we wait any longer for him—why does he set himself in battle array against us, and pursue us as a flea in the mountain, or a leaf driven by the wind—we can make no amends for the past,

and must give up, and lie down in our shame, and our confusion cover us, for we have sinned against the Lord our God, we, and our fathers, from our youth, even unto this day (Jer. iii. 25). All these, and similar obstacles, true lively faith, overcomes. It may be shaken, diminished, interrupted, and small as a grain of mustard seed, but it can not be wholly lost, for it is the gift, and grace of God, which he will nourish, and cherish, to life eternal. When in lively exercise, it quickens and enlivens our duties—perfumes our services—supports in trials, and gives hope and comfort in life and death—rebukes anxiety and fear, and gives joy and consolation, in the midst of trouble and privation. It enables the believer to say, the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation (Hab. iii). This believing dis-

covery of pardon, is a great support in trials, and some have had the assurance and comfort of it: as David, Job, Paul and others. All are required to seek it, and draw near to God, in the full assurance of faith, (Heb. x. 22.) but through sinful indulgence, sloth, and living so far from God, few obtain it, and bring forth its fruits, which are love, joy, peace, and even readiness to suffer, for Christ and his cause. It appears from (Isa. l. 10.) that there may be a discovery of pardon, when there is no sensible assurance of it. Here, the person is described, as walking, or continuing in darkness, yet he is one, that fears the Lord, and his language is, that however it be with him, there is pardon for him with God, and I will not let him go, except he bless me; though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. His mountain may at one time stand strong, and from the top of Pisgah, he may see the King in his beauty, and the land that is yet far off: and, at another, he may be in the valley of desertion, mourning without the sun. Job said, I know hat my Redeemer liveth; and again, O!

that I knew where I might find him—O! that I were as in months past—as in the days when God preserved me, when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light, I walked through darkness (Job xix,25. xxiii, 3. 8. 9. xxix, 2. 3). Jesus said, this is the work of God, that ye believe on him, whom he hath sent—and that believing, ye might have life through his name (John vi, 29. xx, 31). It is then, our duty to believe, and all that "believe in pardon, believe it for the ends, and purposes, for which God revealed it; and he revealed it, that in granting pardon, he might be all in all, and that all, might be by grace—that we might have a new foundation for obedience, love and gratitude—that men should love, because forgiven, and be holy, because pardoned." Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little (Luke vii, 47).

But for *receiving, and enjoying pardon, true evangelical repentance is necessary*—that saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of

a true sight and sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of heart, and endeavor after new obedience. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Repentance is not the meritorious and procuring cause of forgivness, but the connecting link, or cause, and is inseparable from pardon and eternal life. It contains contrition, confession, and conversion. True brokenness of heart for sin, as offensive to God, and contrary to his law, is essential to it, and this is a sacrifice, God will not despise (Ps. li, 17). While the penitent further exclaims, against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight—I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee, (Luke xv). He resolved and went, not like Cain and Judas, from God, but to him; leaving his dry husks, and filthy swine, all behind. The tears of godly sorrow, are not all dried up, when the sin that caused them, is forgiven and put away: but it is a continual exer-

cise, leading the penitent to weep in secret, for his own sins, and the sins of others, because they keep not God's law, and to exclaim, "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night, for the slain, of the daughter of my people," and for the sin of my soul. Surely after that I was turned, I repented, and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh; I was ashamed, yea, were confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth. Then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed--that thou mayest remember, and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God. (Jer. ix, 1. xxxi, 19. Ezk. xvi, 61, 63). Then repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins--Him hath God exalted, with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgivness of sins (Acts ii, 38. v, 31). It is after the new heart is given

that they repent and weep, because of sin (Ezk. xxxvi, 26. 31).

Confession also, is not only necessary, but in the order of nature, goes before pardon. When the Israelites would confess their sin, and humble their hearts, God would remember his covenant with them (Lev. xxvi, 40–42). He that covereth his sins, shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth, and forsaketh them, shall have mercy (Prov. xxviii, 13). Forsaking is absolutely necessary, for it is solemn mockery to confess, and still retain our sins. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me, we must lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us or we can not run the Christian race; we must part with every sin, though dear to us as a right hand or right eye, we must slay them or they will slay us; break our league with death and our agreement with hell. If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell; and if thy right hand offend thee, cut

it off and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. (Matt. v, 29, 30.) When God called his backslidden people to return, because he is merciful and will not keep anger forever, he said, only acknowledge thine iniquity, thus intimating that on acknowledgment they would obtain pardon. (Jer. iii, 12, 13.) Even nature teaches this order of duty, as seen in the case of David and the Prodigal. I said, I will confess my transgression unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. (Ps. xxxii,5.) If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John i, 9.) The confession must be made to God, or to man, or to both, as the case may be. If the offence be against man only, the confession must be to him. Confess your faults one to another. If against God only, it is to him alone we must confess. And if we have offended both God and man, confession must be made to both the offended parties. Confession must

also be public or private, according to the nature of the offence. If the offence be public the confession must be public, but if it be private, the confession must be so; and those who give publicity to a private offence, act the part of slanderers. No law, human or divine, requires a man to accriminate himself; and to make a public disclosure of his own private crimes, which from their nature would not disclose themselves, is to expose his own shame. But if from the nature of the offence it will become public, every honest man will freely confess his sin. In this view we are supported by Dr. Dodridge, Rev. E. Erskine, and others. The general rule for private offences, is "If thy brother trespass against thee, tell him his fault between thee and him *alone*. If he shall hear thee thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established; and if he neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an

heathen man, and as a publican. (Mat. xviii, 15, 17.) But the confession must be free without constraint—full without reserve, It must be particular and ingenuous. Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight. Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great. If any say I have sinned and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. (Job xxxiii, 27, 28.)

It is necessary for those who believe there is forgiveness for them with God, but who have not yet a *sense* of their interest in it, still *to wait on Him*. This waiting includes patience, quietness, and diligence in the use of means, and epxectation in opposition to distrust and despair. The means are, reading the word, meditation and prayer, the dispensation of ordinances, mortification of sin and religious conference. As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the face of a man his friend. If, on the eruption of old sins or new lusts, and a perplexing sense of guilt, and burden of sin, you say, We wait for light, but behold

obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness; we looked for peace and there is no good, for the time of healing, and behold trouble; the harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved; and thus give up waiting, you may expect to fail. (Isa. lix, 9; Jer. xiv, 19.) Or, if through prevailing iniquity after a season of obedience you are overcome by the same or similar sins you had forsaken, you give up and say it is in vain to contend any more, all is lost and gone, I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nought and in vain, I shall one day fall totally and finally, by the hand of mine enemy, the same result may be expected: for it is distrusting God's promise and power to save. Perhaps you have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. Job and Jonah and the Church complained, but still adhered to God and recovered. They said it is good unto thee that thou shouldst oppress, that thou shouldst despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked, for now thou numberest my steps, dost thou not watch over my sin

Also when I cry and shout he shutteth out my prayer. My strength and my hope are perished from the Lord. Thou hast covered thyself with a cloud, that our prayers should not pass through. (Job. x, 3, 14, 16; Lam. iii, 8, 18, 44.) Then I said I am cast out of thy sight, yet will I look again toward thy holy temple. (Jonah ii, 4.) The latter part of this verse shows that the true believer will not give up even when cast out of God's sight—when all evidence of sense fails, he will still hold on his way and endure to the end, waiting God's time, which is the best. He that believeth shall not make haste. Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him. My soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him. In the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up, waiting and expecting an answer. Like a merchant whose goods are yet on a foreign shore, his inheritance may yet be in a foreign land, but he watches every gale of the spirit, examines all evidences, and finding them in his favor, though his treasure is not yet in actual possession, he rejoices to find

that it is safe. He takes joyfully the spoiling of his goods, knowing that in heaven he has a better and an enduring substance. He does not entertain hard thoughts against God, for these would alienate his heart from him. He remembers that God is sovereign, and infinitely wise, and says, I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause and execute judgment for me. He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness. (Mic. vii, 9.) The great difficulty with many is, that in their estimation, their sins are so numerous, and so great, and so aggravated, that they can not be forgiven. But let such remember that God is plenteous and abundant in mercy—that there is mercy with him to suit the case of the greatest sinner. He has promised to redeem Israel from all his iniquities. (Ps. cxxx; Jer. xxxiii, 8.) The promise is universal, and it is sure. The evidence of pardon might be abused, by us, as temporal mercies are by many, and for this reason withheld from God's people, lest they would be their ruin.

Riches are often kept for men to their hurt; wisdom and high places are the ruin of many; liberty has proved a snare; prosperity slays the foolish; luxury, riot, pride, profanity, intemperance, oppression and atheism are the fruits of affluence. "Gold glitters most where virtue shines no more," and many think it gives moral worth and a passport to heaven. There is so much of the pharisee about us, that a sensible evidence of pardon "might degenerate into self-righteousness, and be set down as a part of our justification;" and for this reason is withheld that we may wait on God for daily supplies, as the Israelites did for manna from heaven. Then it is our duty to wait till he send relief as did the Church, knowing that the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever. (Isa. xxxii, 17.) One experimental embrace of an interest in Christ, though not till the hour of death, is well worth waiting for all our life; and it shall be said in that day, Lo this is our God, we have waited for Him, and he will save us. This is the Lord, we have

waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation. (Isa. xxv, 9.) Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee. The desire of our souls is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation. (Isa. xxvi, S; Luke. ii, 29, 30.) O, here is joy unspeakable and full of glory. Whatever then may befall the believer, all things shall work together for good to them that love God. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; and it is their duty to rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him, without complaining. "Thou hast removed my soul far off from peace; I forgat prosperity, and I said my strength and my hope is perished from the Lord, remembering mine affliction and my misery, the wormwood and the gall, my soul hath them still in remembrance, and is troubled in me. This I call to mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not; they are

new every morning; great is thy faithfulness; the Lord is my portion saith my soul, therefore will I hope in him. The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord. (Lam. iii, 17, 26.) For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie, though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry." (Hab. ii, 3.)

CHAPTER VII.

EVIDENCES OF PARDON.

The great inquiry of the awakened and anxious sinner remains yet to be answered. He not only enquires, is there pardon for sinners, but is there pardon for *him*. His language is, I am now satisfied that there is forgiveness with God, and plenteous redemp-

tion is ever found with him. Jesus is able to save to the uttermost, but have *I* an interest in the salvation he has wrought out and brought in, for if not, it will be of no avail to me to know this, unless to enhance my misery. A great estate is bequeathed to men, but unless I am among the legatees it profits me nothing. There is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, and it is of the utmost importance to have a clear title to it. All men are in a state of nature or of grace. The one is a state of death, the other of life; the one of darkness the other of light; the one of enmity, the other of love; and we must be born again—born of water and of the Spirit or we can not enter into the kingdom of God. But we do not know *assuredly* that we are born again—can not tell the *time* and *place* of this birth, and as sin still cleaves to us, we fear that we are still in a state of nature without a title to pardon and eternal life. But, my friend, you may not be able to tell the *time*, *place* and *manner*, of your natural birth, and are you not then afraid that you

were never born? Moreover as this ignorance does not affect your natural existence, so neither does it affect the *reality* of your spiritual existence, to be unable to tell the *time, place* and *manner* of your conversion. The existence of the natural man is known by *his actions*, so the existence of the spiritual man is known by *his operations*. Some are sanctified from the womb, as Jeremiah; others are gradually renewed by the still, small voice of the gospel, and the mysterious operations of the Spirit and grace in the soul, and may not be able to mark any change in their life, unless that they know that whereas they were blind, now they see. Others are suddenly arrested in a course of sin, and may easily tell the time and place of their conversion. But the *general evidence* is their *conduct*. "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles. Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree can not bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Wherefore by their

fruits ye shall know them. (Matt. vii.) But we are not to look for absolute evidence to the exclusion of all doubts and cause of self-examination. Sin and unbelief will still abide in the best of men, and work against the principle of grace—a constant warfare will be going on, in which the victory sometimes seems doubtful. Nor must we look for an extraordinary evidence by the testimony of the Spirit. The nature of that evidence is not well understood, and about it men differ in their views. If we have ever received a special testimony by the Spirit, even of our sincerity, it is our duty to retain it with gratitude, or if lost, to endeavor to recover a sense of it again, for support in time of darkness and trial. God may give a secret intimation of his love and acceptance or he may shine immediately into the soul. These intimations are generally transient, like the glimmering of light in some obscure place, and should be treasured up for time of need, that in trouble we may remember those precious seasons when God shone upon our souls, and we apprehended his mercy, ex-

tending through Christ to us though the chief of sinners.

But to come to particulars. *Purity of heart and life is an evidence of pardon.* Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Every man that hath this hope purifieth himself even as he is pure; and God purifies their hearts by faith. To their eye, holiness is more beautiful than the purling, silvery stream, or the glory of the azure firmament, and next to the divine glory, they pursue it as indispensable to seeing the Lord, They may yet have no sensible evidence of this purity, but their constant and earnest desire to obtain it, is rather an argument in favor of its present existence in the soul, encouraging them to believe that God will, in due time, hear and fulfill their utmost desire, as he does the poor and needy, that seek and thirst for water, when there is none. (Isa. xli, 17.) Many things counteract and weaken this evidence especially the remains of depravity, warring to their heart sorrow against the law of their mind. Since it is written, they that are Christ's have crucified

the flesh with the affections and lusts, many think there should not be a vestige of that depravity which excites to every sin, and attempts to hinder and defile every duty. But finding it still within them, and forgetting that they are only partially sanctified, till the close of natural life, when they are made perfect in holiness, and immediately pass into glory, they are often greatly troubled, they often lose sight of the fact that there are two principles in the believer, as there is in the Shulamite a company of two armies; the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye can not do the things ye would. I see, says Paul, another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin. Here there is a warfare which commences with the new birth, and terminates only with death, when the believer is more than conqueror, through Jesus Christ; and your state is to be measured not so much by the opposition of sin to you, as by your opposition to it.

Is this sincere, constant, determined, leading you to resist unto blood, striving against sin, or is it the reverse? If this conflict is going on in you, what is it that gives you trouble, and makes you complain of the burden of sin? Is it not the principle of grace, struggling against the principle of depravity and sin, because it is so hateful and loathsome to you, in view of all that God is doing and has done for you, as a sinner? Is there any such struggle and conflict in the unregenerate who are dead in trespasses and sins? Might we not as well think to hear the dead complain of pain, as to hear the unrenewed sinner complain of sin? We do not look for perfection, or perfect purity, till sanctification is completed by its divine Author. But, as the needle inclines to the pole, so we look for purity to prevail, inclining the soul to God, in his nature, will, and ordinances, and making the path of the just shine brighter and brighter, like the natural day, from the faint dawn of the morning to its meridian splendor. Paul, after having been caught up in a vision, to the third heavens, did not con

sider himself already perfect, but pressed on toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. So it is with the true Christian, who, leaning on the Beloved of his soul, goes up through the wilderness of this world, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, till he arrives at the portals of bliss, enters into the joy of his Lord, drinks of the river of water of life, that proceeds out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, and bathes in an ocean of glory forever and ever. Now his conversation is from heaven, and as becometh the gospel. No filthy communication proceeds out of his mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers. That his religion may not be vain, he bridles his tongue, and keeps his heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life, and his speech bewrays him. He is renewed in heart and purged from his old sins, so that he can enter heaven by the strait gate, which is too narrow to admit any with unmortified lusts. But while imperfection remains, he is fallible, incon-

stant, and liable to decay—to be guilty of actual sin, and to grieve the Spirit—and God never intended that any should retain their confidence, and sin at the same time. The assurance that sin will not shake, does not deserve the name. But "the soul has not ceased to do with sin; the saint traverses a battle field to his rest only with much conflict, many wounds, many stumbles, occasional overthrows. His course is for the most part, that of a victor. Around the soul on earth, there is a body of death, wisely left to try and purify it, but it is there only by protest; it is not welcome. Duties are mixed with sin, but an outside performance will satisfy only an outside Christian." But like the river to the ocean, widening and deepening, and flowing with incredible smoothness, as it approaches the end, so the believer's course is onward and heavenward, increasing in holiness, righteousness and peace, as he advances nearer his eternal rest. His affections are set on things above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God, and where his utmost desires for holiness will be

fully and forever gratified. What a contrast is there between him and the unrenewed man, whose heart is like the vineyard of the sluggard, all grown over with thorns, and nettles have covered the face thereof, and like mystical Babylon, which is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird; wallowing in the filth and mire of sin, his thoughts are unclean, sensual, worldly, devilish. His filthy conversation, like a pestilence, every where spreads moral disease and death, and his whole life is a tissue of cherished sin, in which he delights as most congenial to his unrenewed nature.

Those that are forgiven will love God and all that pertains to him. How can it be otherwise? How can those who have received such an unspeakable blessing as pardon, ever cease to love him, who, in the greatness of his mercy, has granted it. It is a principle both of nature and of grace, that we love a kind benefactor. A slave will greatly love the man who freely gives him his liberty. A debtor spontaneously loves and celebrates

the beneficence of one that has freely forgiven him a great debt; so the sinner can never cease to love and adore God, who freely forgives him the enormous debt of sin, which he could never pay, and who brings him from the slavery of sin and Satan, into the glorious liberty of his children. The song of the redeemed is unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. To him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Mary Magdalene, who washed the Saviour's feet with tears, and kissed and anointed them, loved much, because her sins, which were many, were forgiven her. This is true of all that are forgiven. The language of their hearts is, we love him because he first loved us, and has given us the clearest possible manifestation of his love, in the unspeakable gift of his own dear Son. Language fails to express the length and breadth, the depth and height of this divine love, lasting long as eternity; extending wide as the world, stooping low as hell, and exalting high as heaven. With reference to it, the apostle exclaims, herein is love, not that we

loved God, but that he loved us, and hath sent his son to be the propitiation for our sins. Even apart from what God has done in forgiving us, he is worthy of our supreme, undivided and unceasing love. No perfection of his nature is set forth like this. As if it were the soul of all the rest, it is said "God is love" and taking this into the account with what he has done for us, in the gift of his Son, and salvation by him, we exclaim with the psalmist, I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplications; because he hath delivered my soul from the lowest hell. (Ps. 116.) I love him more than all heaven and earth contain—more than house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands or life itself. I count all things but loss for Christ, and my life not dear that I may win Christ, and be found in him without spot or blemish, at his appearing and glory. I love God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, and would manifest it by constantly endeavoring to glorify him with my body and spirit—by reverence and devotion to him

—by keeping his commandments out of a pure heart, and faith unfeigned—by a constant, and faithful, and grateful observance, of the public and private ordinances of grace, where the soul is refreshed and made like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not—by liberally supporting, by all lawful and available means, the kingdom of Jesus Christ, that a great revenue of glory may redound to God in our salvation, and in the salvation of millions of our fallen race. The goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance—the love of Christ constraineth us—our evil is overcome by divine goodness. He loves God with all his heart, and his neighbor as himself. He loves God's *people* and *word* and *ordinances*, and thus has an evidence of forgiveness. We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death, for he that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen. (1 Jno. iii, 14;-iv, 20.) By this, says Christ, shall all men know that ye are

my disciples, if ye have love one to another. (Jno. 13, 35.) Love to God, and the brethren are convertible terms. Where love to the one exists, love to the other exists also; and for the sincerity of it, they can sometimes adopt the language of Peter, when interrogated on this subject; Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. This love is not confined to sect, or party, or nation, or to the gold ring, and goodly apparel, or to names and "flattering titles" (Job. xxxii, 22), and adventitious circumstance — the generating principles of love, and partiality, and favoritism, too manifest in this day of declension, when the love of many has waxed cold, and parity among brethren, even of the Presbyterian name, appears no greater than it did in the Aaronical priesthood; but it extends to the whole Christian fraternity, where, in the judgments of charity, we have reason to believe the image of Christ is found; "for those who confine their love to a sect or party, to whom God has not confined his grace, are souls too narrow to be put among the chil-

dren." (Boston.) The true Christian loves not in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth, and proves this by impartial acts of kindness, of regard, and of mercy, for which he will receive a glorious reward. Whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple, verily, I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward. (Matt. x, 42.) Yea, he loves all men, and prays for his spiteful, cursing, persecuting enemies. (Matt. v, 44.) Time was when an enemy could say of Christians, behold how they love one another. Then all men might know that they were the disciples of the Lord Jesus. How simple and plain is this evidence by which every one, however feeble in intellect, or limited in attainment, may try himself, and see if he has reason to believe that his sins are forgiven. Does he in deed, and in truth, love the brethren of our Lord and Saviour merely because they bear his divine image? He also loves the *word*, and *ordinances*, and *house* of God, with reference to which his language is, O

how I love thy law; it is my meditation all the day. I love thy commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold; how sweet are thy words unto my taste, yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth. The law of thy mouth is better unto me, than thousands of gold and silver. I will keep thy statutes; thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee. How amiable are thy tabernacles O Lord of hosts. My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord, for a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honor dwelleth. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple. I prefer Jerusalem above my chief joy. Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion; build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none upon

earth that I desire besides thee. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God. Thy spirit is good—lead me into the land of uprightness. Jesus says to us, ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you; and the first and great commandment is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love to God will show itself by daily endeavoring to glorify him in our bodies and spirits, which are his; and to our neighbor, by laboring for his temporal and spiritual interests. The fruit of faith is love, purity, and victory over the world. Love is the fulfilling of the law, and the source of every Christian duty. Without it we are nothing, will do nothing, and can do nothing right and acceptable to God. Then what evidence of pardon have those who are destitute of this love, and who neglect the word, and ordinances of grace, and shun that "house of prayer, which is unto all people." O, did they know by experience that God

dwells in Zion—that he is a wall of fire round about her, and the glory in the midst—that there he meets with his people, holds communion with them, and confers on them the choicest blessings—gives them a new, and an everlasting name, and makes them pillars in his temple, where they shall go no more out, but reign with him in glory unspeakable, would they not love the habitation of his house, and rejoice when it is said unto them, let us go into the house of the Lord, to behold his beauty, and inquire in his pavilion?

Hatred of sin, and every thing opposed to God, is a trait in the character of those who are forgiven. They will hate what God hates, and love what he loves—hate every false and wicked way, and war against all sin, and mourn because of it wherever, and in whomsoever it is found; will hate sin as our common enemy, that has spread misery and death so far and wide through the universe, and brought the Lord of glory down to the cursed death of the cross—sin, traitor to God and ruiner of man; mother of woe, and

death, and hell. As he is born of God, and as sin is that abominable thing which God hates, so he hates it as much as he ever loved it, and this hatred is not merely from a principle of self love, because that sin has wounded and dishonored him, and brought ruin on his soul, but it is from a sense of ingratitude done to God, and from a sense of its vile and evil nature, as opposed to God and his law, and therefore in humility and dependence on divine aid, he declares and raises a determined and irrevocable warfare against all sin. He has an inward abhorrence of all sin, which he loathes and shuns as a deadly poison. O, sin is my enemy, and my greatest, sorest burden. I long to be delivered not only from its dominion, but also from its very existence. We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house, which is from heaven. I can not roll sin as a sweet morsel under my tongue, nor make provision for it. I can not love that which pierced my dear Saviour with the greatest sorrows, and drank his life's blood, but am a

sworn enemy of it, and determined to resist it in the name of my God, until I shall be more than conqueror, through Jesus Christ, my hope and Redeemer.

All may be summed up in *love, purity, keeping the commandments out of a pure heart, and faith unfeigned; hatred of sin, victory over our spiritual foes, as the world, the devil, and the flesh; the approbation of our hearts, and the testimony of the Spirit; fatherly chastisement; a forgiving and charitable disposition; a high estimate of pardon, and earnest, untiring seeking after it.* Great is the influence of the world over men in their natural state. It is their chief good, their god. They love it, fear it, cling to it as their last hope. Though professing to believe the gospel, they regulate their lives by the opinions, and maxims, and policy of the world, and not by the principles of revealed and eternal truth. How different is it with the believer. Faith enables him to overcome the world, and live above it, regardless of its favors and its frowns; to use the world as not abusing it; remembering the fashion there-

of passeth away. Whosoever is born of God overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith; if any man loveth the world, the love of the father is not in him. (1 Jno. ii, 15; v, 4.) The believer sees that Jesus Christ gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, and from its vain conversation. (Gal. i, 4; 1 Peter, i, 18.) He remembers that to be Christ's disciple he must take up his cross, leave all and follow him, who though he was rich, yet for your sakes, became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich in the possession of all spiritual good through time and eternity. He now has desires the world can not satisfy; sees neither beauty nor permanency in it, and hence looks above and beyond it to the king in his beauty, and the land that is very far off. (Isa. xxxiii, 17.) He knows "There is a land of pure delight, where saints immortal reign; infinite day excludes the night, and pleasures banish pain. There no fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold." There they are clothed with white robes, and

palms in their hands, and cry with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb. The angels join the universal chorus, saying, Amen. Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God, forever and ever, amen. (Rev. vii.) The god of this world is overcome; Christ has destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and however he may yet obtain partial victories, yet the God of peace shall shortly bruise him forever under your feet. Through Christ we shall be more than conquerors, and crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts. Overcoming these and the lusts that war against the soul, and all such foes, is an evidence of forgiveness. By this I know that thou favorest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me. (Ps. xli, 11.) Our *hearts*, and also the Holy Spirit, will bear us witness. Hereby we know that we are of the truth. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God, and hereby we know that

he abideth in us, by the spirit which he hath given us. (1 Jno. iii, 19, 21, 24.) This does not mean that our hearts are stupified by sin, nor that they do not smite, and reproach, and condemn us at any time, for that would argue a state of insensibility, or of perfection, but it means that our hearts are sprinkled, and our consciences purged from sin by the blood of Christ, which speaks peace, and gives confidence toward God. The testimony of the heart or conscience is better to us than a thousand external witnesses, yet God is greater than our heart, and knows all things, and is a surer and swifter witness. The spirit which he hath given us, is a spirit like that which Caleb and Joshua had, different from the other spies in search of the land of promise, and to a great extent like that which rested on Jesus Christ, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord; in a word it is the spirit of Christ; a spirit of revelation, in the knowledge of him, a spirit of meekness and forgiveness, of grace and sup-

plications, a spirit of union to Christ, of regeneration and sanctification, of adoption of faith and love, the holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of his glory, the spirit of truth by which we are sealed, evincing his existence by his fruits, and the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. This fruit is the evidence he gives of his inhabitation in our hearts, and consequently of our pardon.

The same truth is evinced by *fatherly chastisement.* As many as I love I rebuke and chasten. (Rev. iii, 19.) To some this may seem a strange evidence. But numerous passages of scripture set it forth in a clear light. To his chosen people Jehovah said, you only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities. (Amos iii, 2.) If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and

their iniquity with stripes. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth; if ye are without chastisements, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards. and not sons; all are partakers. Whoever escapes in this life, they will not. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. Consider the design of affliction; it is for our profit that we may be partakers of his holiness, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. (1 Cor. xi, 32.) Our correction, our trial, our conformity to Christ, our detachment from the world, our profit and salvation, and God's glory, are all designed by affliction; our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. (2 Cor. iv, 17.) You may know that it is fatherly chastisement, and not divine wrath, by its fruits. If it yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness, weans us from the world, conforms us to Christ, drives us from sin and self, and leads

us to God as our Father, in whom compassions flow, and with whom the fatherless find mercy, it is an evidence that it is a chastisement, sent in love, and not in anger; and you will say, It is good for me that I have been afflicted that I might learn thy statutes. I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me. He that spareth his rod, hateth his son, but he that loveth him, chasteneth him betimes. (Ps. cxix, 71, 75; Prov. xiii, 22.) O Lord, correct me in mercy, and in measure, not in wrath, lest thou consume me; lest the spirit should fail, and the souls which thou hast made. O Lord, thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke; turn thou me and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God. (Isa. lvii, 16; Jer. x, 24.) Correct me, but with judgment, not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. (Jer. xxxi, 18; xxx, 11, 17.) I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished. I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee

of thy wounds, saith the Lord, because they call thee an outcast, saying this is Zion, whom no man seeketh after. Thus God does with his people, and he may chastise them by depriving them of some blessing, temporal or spiritual, dearest to their heart, or he may grant the desired blessing, with an attending care or thorn.

A *forgiving and charitable disposition belongs to those who are forgiven.* They must partake of the same spirit that is in our Lord and Saviour, who requires us to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us, and do good to them that hate us, and pray for them which despitefully use us; requires us to feed our enemy, and give him water to drink; to not render evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise, blessing. To forgive if ye have aught against any, that your Father who is heaven, may forgive you your trespasses; to forgive, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (Matt. v; 1 Peter, iii, 9; Mark xi, 25; Eph. iv, 32). And as Jesus has set us an example, who on the cross apologized and prayed for his ene-

mies: "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." In imitation of his example, the martyr Stephen, pelted with stones, kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, in behalf of his murderers, Lord lay not this sin to their charge. He had tasted the sweetness of that greatest blessing, pardon; pardon for infinite offence, bought with blood divine; and was thus enabled to forgive his foes. O, when we remember what an enormous debt of sin God has forgiven us, and daily pray, forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, can we have any other feeling in our hearts, than a disposition to forgive, even till seventy times seven. It seems to us, that those who are of a revengeful, unforgiving disposition, and are scarcely willing to forgive the smallest offence, real or imaginary, have great reason to fear that they have never obtained pardon from God; for, if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your tresspasses. (Matt. vi, 15) *The same is true of charity*, for whoso hath this world's good, and seeth

his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? (1 John iii, 1) How can it dwell in him, more than in those who saw Christ in the person of his people, an hungered, and thirsty, and a stranger, and naked, sick, and in prison, and did not minister unto him? Ah, it can not. Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity. Without it, no man is a Christian; whatever he may profess, he is nothing, and has no evidence of pardon. Alas, what will those think of this, who are wedded to their golden dust, and who with hearts steeled against the wants, temporal and spiritual, of suffering humanity, "drive the poor away, unalmsed, with looks which hell might be ashamed of." Certainly, they can not, with this mark of Cain on them, lay claim to the faith and inheritance of Abel. It is characteristic of the righteous, that he "showeth mercy, and giveth." (Ps. xxxvii, 21) His charity extends also to the views of others; it suffereth long and is kind; beareth all things; be-

lieveth all things; hopeth all things; endureth all things, and never fails. Every one who has obtained pardon, will *prize* it as one of *heaven's greatest blessings*, and will *never* rest till he has obtained a *full* and *sensible evidence* of it. Even after God said to David, I have put away thy sin; thou shalt not die, he prayed: restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; O let me see thy countenance; give me some comfortable evidence of the remission of my sins, that I may enjoy thee as the portion of my soul. He is importunate, saying, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. The prisoner, the captive, and the slave, can not prize their liberty more than we do pardon; nor can those doomed to death prize a release from the grave more than we do the forgiveness of our sins, which bring us down to the prison of death and hell. Without this blessing, no other can be enjoyed. While the curse of God rests on man, he pines away in his sins, amid pleasures and palaces, sumptuous fare, and treasures of fine gold. In a word, have you

given yourself to *Christ*, that he may *sanctify* and *save* you, *govern* and *use* you for his glory. Vain are your hopes, if there has not been a cordial and entire devotement of yourself to God, and a deep humiliation before him, for all your sins, and an avowed and determined war declared against them. This surrender must be in faith and dependence on Christ, and this faith must be sincere, and this opposition to sin must be because of its deformity, and vileness, and malignity, as contrary to God, and his law. It is not enough to have assumed a new name and robe, or to have a partial change of heart. The change must be universal; the name and robe must be from him, who gives his people a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it, and who clothes the returning prodigal with the best robe. Have you the spirit of Christ? Is the same mind in you that was in Christ Jesus? Have you any of his love, devotion, and resignation to the will of God? Have you any of his purity, pa-

tience, wisdom, contempt for the applause, and honors, and riches of the world? Have you any of his fortitude, zeal, sincerity, constancy, meekness, prudence, fidelity to God; regard to his spirit, his people, his interests? Do you rejoice in his ordinances, and carefully improve them, and cherish the influences of the Holy Spirit? Have you firmly resolved with constant care to avoid whatever you know God would disapprove, and to dispatch the work he has assigned you in life, and to promote his glory in the happiness of mankind? Are your motives of action pure and honest in the sight of God, and are you careful to be, before him, what you profess to be before men. Do you prefer the soul to the body, and spiritual things to temporal? Does the remembrance of your sin fill you with shame and sorrow of heart, even when it is secret, and when you have reason to hope it is forgiven. Are your desires for the world after, which there is such an insatiable thirst, ever growing with indulgence and success, moderate, and in subordination to God's glory? Are

you content with such things as you have, knowing he is faithful who has said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee? Even when in poverty, do you enjoy all things, in God; and God in all things? Have you put on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another, and forgiving one another (1 Col. iii, 12). Have you a tender regard to God's word and ordinances, a tender caution against all sin, a tender submission to God's afflicting hand, and will you allow any thing that will offend him, and reproach his name and cause? Do you feel and deplore your corrupt nature, evil inclinations, and habits, that are so difficult to overcome as to defy human power (Jer. xiii, 23)? Have you this rejoicing, the testimony of your conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God you have had your conversation in the world (2 Cor. i, 12)? Then, amid all your difficulties and opposition, from earth and hell, you may look upward and onward, and

you will find that Jesus is near, for your deliverance, for your wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. O, that these evidences of pardon may be found in us, to the praise of the glory of his grace.

CHAPTER VIII.

WARNING AND EXHORTATION.

But we can not dismiss this subject, without *warning all* against *the commission of sin*, and *without exhorting those* that are yet *in* their *sins*, and those that are yet *in darkness*, to *seek forgiveness* from God, and *all* who have *received this great blessing*, to *never cease* their songs of *praise* to *him* who forgives all our iniquities, and heals all our diseases. There is no blessing, however great, which is not liable to abuse, by sinful men. They even turn the grace of God

into lasciviousness, and, because the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin, and because some of the chief of sinners have been forgiven, these graceless sinners may hence take encouragement to sin. But let me warn such, against this fearful presumption; for if this be the principle on which you act, take care that God does not swear, in his wrath, that you shall not enter into his rest. If he spared not the natural branches, take heed, lest he also spare not thee (Rom. xi, 21). If judgment first begin at the house of God, what shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear (1 Pt. iv, 17, 18)? Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. But remember that the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; that his spirit will not always strive with man; justice will not sleep forever. He will arise

as a giant refreshed with wine, and rain upon the wicked, snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest; this shall be the portion of their cup. He will render to every man according to his deeds; to them who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil (Rom. ii). All this wrath, poured out on the old world; on Sodom and Gomorrah, yet suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. Behold it in the plagues of Egypt, and the overthrow of their armies in the Red sea; in the fearful destruction of Korah and his company; in the destruction of the seven idolatrous nations; in the leprosy of Miriam; of Gehazi; and in the plagues that often consumed thousands of God's chosen, but rebellious people, who are now dispersed among all nations, as a standing monument of Jehovah's displeasure at sin. Even Moses was

not permitted to enter the land of promise, for speaking unadvisedly with his lips, and not honoring God at the waters of Meribah. For David's complicated sin, his wives were given to his neighbor, and the sword never departed from his house. Herod was eaten up of worms, because he gave not God the glory. Anti-Christ — mystical Babylon — will yet fall, to rise no more; the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God. Then, sin is followed with punishment either in this life or in the next. Sin entails misery. The way of transgressors is hard; hard, as opposed to God and his law, to reason, and conscience, and happiness. Then, my son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. Resist the devil, and he will flee from thee. The moment you *begin* to listen to him, you are on the highway to ruin. Suppress the first emotions of sin; for lust, when it is conceived, bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death. Look not upon the wine when it is red; when it giveth his color in the cup; when it moveth

itself aright. At the last, it biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. But virtue brings its own reward, even in this life. Godliness is profitable unto all things; having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come (1 Tim. iv, 8). When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him; as long as Uzziah sought the Lord, God made him to prosper (Prov. xvi, 7; 2 Chron. xxvi, 5). Hence, my son, forget not my law, but let thine heart keep my commandments; for length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. Let not mercy and truth forsake thee; bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart; so shalt thou find favor, and good understanding, in the sight of God and man. Trust in the Lord with all thine heart. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths. Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of thine increase; so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with

new wine. Happy is the man that findeth wisdom; for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her. Length of days is in her right hand, and in her left hand, riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to them that lay hold upon her, and happy is every one that retaineth her (Prov. iii).

Let us further warn the impenitent sinner, by the *threatenings* of the *divine law*, and the *vengeance of eternal fire*, to *not do* that abominable thing which God hates, and which brings on men, as its legitimate fruit, a train of numberless evils in this world, and, in the world to come, the wail of everlasting woe. And let us here introduce, as a warning to the Christian, a brief account of the *punishment* of the Israelites, for their *sin on the borders of Canaan*. Their sin was murmuring, mutiny, unbelief, carnality, and apostacy (Numb. vi, 14; Deut. i, 36; Neh.

ix, 17). For this, they were sent back into the wilderness, by the way of the Red sea, to leave their carcases in the desert, and not be permitted to enter the land of promise. Dreadful punishment! They were already at Kadesh Barnea, the last resting place on the confines of Canaan. There they had come, directly from Horeb, the mount of God, where he said, ye have dwelt long enough (Deut. i, 6); where they had been a year, except ten days (Ex. xix, 1; Numb. x, 11); in which time, the law was given; the tabernacle, and all pertaining to it, were made; rules, ecclesiastical and civil, were appointed, and they were numbered and marshalled, in order, under four standards, ready to march; and, all this being done, they must stay no longer, but set forward for Canaan. They must not stay long under the terrors of the law, but go to mount Zion, the city of the living God. Horeb is the same as Sinai, a famous mountain in Arabia, having two tops; the western, called Horeb, and the eastern, properly called Sinai; also called the mount of God, because he there com-

muned with Moses and Elijah (Ex. xix; 1 K. xix, 8). From this to Kadesh Barnea was eleven days journey, or, they were eleven days between the two places (Deut. i, 2). Philo, the Jew, says it was but ten days journey, and it is certain it was not far, since it was travelled, again and again, by the sons of Jacob, going from Canaan to Egypt to buy corn. It was the nearest way; but God led the people about, by the way of the wilderness of the Red sea, and they departed from Horeb, and went through all that great and terrible wilderness which ye saw by the way of the mountain of the Amorites (Ex. xiii, 17, 18; Deut. i, 19); great, as it reached from Sinai, to Kadesh Barnea, and terrible, as it had no water, was neither plowed nor sown, and contained no fertile spot, nor flowery path, nor fruitful tree; but it contained firey serpents and scorpions, and the image of death (Deut. viii, 15).

On the edge of this wilderness, at Kadesh, the Israelites long sojourned; thence, Moses sent the spies to view the promised land, and

thence, also, they took their retreat into the wilderness, by the way of the Red Sea, and compassed Mount Seir many days, which mount was a part of the possession of Esau (Deut. i, 46; ii, 1-5). Now their backs were upon Canaan, and their faces towards Egypt. Alas! be not high minded, but fear; let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall. God soon brought the Israelites from Egypt to Kadesh-Barnea; regaled their senses with the fragrance of the spicy breezes, wafted down into the desert from that land which flowed with milk and honey, and gave them some clusters of the grapes of Eshcol, to prepare and strengthen them for the toils and conflicts of their journey, and after that, for their sins, sent them back into the howling wilderness, to wander in a solitary way. So he often brings the Christian, warm with the love of his espousals, and strong in the exercise of that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, to the very confines of heaven. The gales of the spirit are wafted gently on his soul, the spices flow out, and his faith looks

across the gulf of time, pierces the vail of eternity, and brings all heaven before his eye. He imagines himself within its golden streets and gates of pearl. But, alas! he awakes from his pleasant dreams, and finds himself again far back in the dark world of sin, where he has yet something to do for Christ's name's sake, and much to learn of the perfections and providence of God, and of the lurking depravity of his own wayward heart, before he can enter into eternal rest, and receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away. But let us conclude this point, principally in the language of an eminent writer (Rev. Islay Burns): Israel did not remain long on the confines of Canaan; in a little time they are in the wilderness again, with Canaan behind, and the wild and desolate desert before them: the distant view; the messengers; the glad tidings; the grapes of Eshcol, are all now among the things that were, and they wander once more in the wilderness, in a solitary way; such reverses are not uncommon in the history of Israel. Thus, no sooner had they

chanted their triumphant song of deliverance on the shores of the Red sea, and scarce had the joyful sound died away on the bosom of the deep, and they turned from gazing on the dark abyss where their worst enemies lay buried, than their toils and their trials began. Their first step towards Canaan, was a step into a howling desert. Then Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days into the wilderness, and found no water. So it was at the rock of Horeb; they were resting in peace around the rock, and drinking with joy from the stream that gushed from its smitten side. A distant sound is heard and a cloud appears on the horizon. An alarm, a stir of approaching danger runs through the camp. It is Amalek, Israel's deadly foe, that is coming on, and they must arise, and fight for their lives. So it is in the experience of the saints in every age. Theirs is a chequered course — alternate cloud and sunshine — conflict and rest — from beginning to end. The day that began in feasting, may close in fighting.

To-day, they are at Kadesh Barnea, within sight, and almost within a step of Canaan; to-morrow, they are in the wilderness, amid dark mountains, and barren, thirsty plains, as though their faces were towards Egypt, and they had lost sight of their home forever. They are sent back into the wilderness for their sin; for their cowardice, and God-dishonoring unbelief, they are found utterly unfit, and unable to enter and possess the land. So it is with us; and God has good reasons for keeping us long in the wilderness, trying and leading us through fire and water, clouds and darkness. He may overrule our guilty backslidings, and melancholy declensions in grace, for good, and make them all redound to his glory at last. He may have work for us to do, lessons for us to learn, which could be done and learned only in a world of tribulation and sin; and hence he may have us struggling on with temptation and sorrow, long after we had obtained the title to the inheritance, and the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. Great usefulness may be the

reason of a long pilgrimage and toilsome conflict, as it was with John and Paul, and Caleb and Joshua, and others, who were sent back for greater usefulness, and as a reward for faithfulness, rather than a rebuke for sin, as thousands were kept back in judgment, for unbelief and rebellion. We are so carnal, so unready, our hearts are so chained to the dust, and so little in unison with our high destiny, we are such slow scholars in the school of Christ, that we are sent back to a sterner school, to learn our lessons over again. It is because we are unripe, that we stand in the field, exposed to the scorching suns, and bleaching rains of a long and chequered scene of sorrows. When the fruit is ripe, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come. They go back of their own accord. God often corrects his people by giving them their own desires, as at the grave of lust, when in anger he sent them the quails, for their lusts after the luxuries of Egypt, for which they would have sold their birthright. But while the meat was in their mouths, the

anger of the Lord was kindled and the plague began, and swept away twenty three thousand to an untimely grave. On this occasion, they said, it were better for us to return to Egypt, and they not only proposed, but also appointed a captain, for this purpose (Numb. xiv, 3, 4; Neh. ix, 17). This melancholy retreat, with all its consequent train of ills and sufferings, was their own guilty act, the device and choice of their own carnal, grovelling and unbelieving hearts. Is it not even so with us? Is not the same evil heart of unbelief in us, departing from the living God, and from our rest? Are we not carnal, sensual, worldly, and when in holy judgment he sent us back, to wander here as exiles still, and abandoned us, it may be, to a low, selfish and unspirtual life, was he not granting us the very wish and device of our own hearts? He brought us to Kadesh Barnea, and would have carried us, by a short and rapid course, to glory; but we would not; we would not enter in, because of unbelief. If we are low in grace, and far behind in the heavenly

journey, it is our own sin and shame; if we are lean, and faint, and unprofitable, and unhappy, it is because we desire to have it so; yea, but for infinite mercy, we had been infinitely worse — we would have gone back, utterly and forever, to the land of death — back to perdition, a thousand times, had not divine and sovreign grace kept us from falling, and given us to know the bitterness of backsliding, and not its deserved doom. All was overruled for their good. It was necessary that this broken, degraded, faint-hearted race, just rescued from the galling yoke of iron despotism — still retaining the hearts of slaves — should be sent back to the school of discipline, that amid privation, toil and conflict, they might acquire the spirit and soul of freemen. God will not have these craven, crouching cowards, who, with necks set free, seem yet to wear the fetters on their hearts — fretting at the least privation — trembling at every danger — giving vent to ignoble and unmanly tears, at the very mention of the enemies between them and their rest — to enter into the glo-

rious land. Besides, how much have they to learn of themselves, and of their God — of his perfections and worship — before they can be what he chose them for, a peculiar people to himself. Hence, they are sent back, to dwell in tents, and wander from mountain to mountain, in the wide and pathless desert. It was their school, where he led them about, and instructed them, and prepared them for their destiny. True, with two exceptions, that race left their carcases in the wilderness; but a new race sprung up, better than their fathers, that served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, and who had known all the works of the Lord which he had done for Israel. Do we not need a similar training? Are we not carnal, unbelieving, ungrateful; fretted by every petty trial, and dismayed by every difficulty? Though free, are we not still slaves in heart, crouching before a poor world's frown, and trailing the heavy chain of carnality about with us? How little holy liberty — how little strength — how little boldness in the

strength that is in Christ Jesus — how unlike our high rank and glorious destiny — how little of the high bearing and royal air of the children of God — of their spirit, and demeanor, and life. Is it not well that we are sent back into the cold and desolate world again, to humble us, to prove us, and know what is in our hearts, to prepare us for the inheritance, and give us a princely heart, worthy of the crown of life. They are not cast off. God never cast off his people, whom he foreknew, but brought to pass all he had promised them. Though graceless individuals may be cast off, yet as a people they are not, and never will. Though troubled on every side, they are not distressed; though perplexed, they are not in despair; though persecuted, they are not forsaken; though cast down, they are not destroyed (2 Cor. iv, 8, 9). This sinful, afflicted, yet still beloved people, are marked as God's, and loved with an unchangeable love; they are delivered by him. The same God who was with them in the sea, and chained up its raging billows till

the last of the ransomed flock passed over, was with them to the end, in the stern battle field, amid the dark mountains, and in the gloomy, thirsty desert. He found them in a desert land, and in the waste, howling wilderness. He led them about, he instructed them, he kept them as the apple of his eye. He sustained them; fed them with his own hand; covered their tables daily with bread from heaven. They had meat to eat which the world knew not of. So our life is hid with Christ in God. We feed on hidden manna; drink life and peace out of the smitten Rock of Ages; we all eat of the same spiritual meat, and drink the same spiritual drink. He guided them; he took not away the pillar of cloud by day, and of fire by night. Their tedious, circuitous route — beset by dangers, and sorrows, and afflictions — is not by chance. Jehovah guides them with his eye, and directs every step. They move, they rest, at his command. He leadeth his people by the right way, unto the city of habitation. The man of the world may travel on awhile cheer-

fully, over rich and flowery paths, but he travels at random. He knows not whither he goes, and his next step may be a step into hell. But the believer's footsteps are ordered by the Lord, and hence are safe and sure. Thou who deliverest my soul from death, wilt not thou deliver also my feet from falling, that I may walk before the Lord in the light of the living? Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. They are chastened by him, and gracious chastisements are an invincible and infallible mark of grace. They are provided in the covenant, and are sure to all the seed (Ps. lxxxix, 30, 31). Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth. This is evident from the whole history of Israel, which was one continued train of sin, and chastisement following, in sure succession. So it is with God's people. The chastening rod; the hedge of thorns; the refining furnace; the fiery darts of the enemy; frowns of Providence, and hidings of the Father's face, when his people forsake his law and go astray, will follow them. These are essen-

tial features of God's children, and as real a token of salvation as the showers of manna from heaven, or the heavy grapes of Eshcol. This seal of the living God is upon them. Think also of the destruction of Jerusalem, plowed as an heap, and of the dispersion of the Jews among all nations, and the evil entailed for eating the forbidden fruit. But we must not rashly conclude, that every afflicted man is a true Christian; nor that every afflicted Christian is a great sinner. Abraham and Job were afflicted for trial, and so were the Israelites led about forty years in the wilderness, to humble and prove them, and to know what was in their heart (Deut. viii, 2). The wicked are not generally toiled and plagued as others, yet sometimes they receive correction in this life. The truth is, that from external dispensations of Providence no man can tell either love or hatred, by all that is before him. We must then look at the design and spirit of affliction. Is it to humble and prove us, and bring us to God? Does it work the peaceable fruits of righteousness, fitting us for an eternal weight

of glory? O, let us take warning by what befel God's peculiar people, for with many of them God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition (1 Cor. x, 5-11).

Beware of declension in religion. It will first begin by a failure in secret duties. They will first be observed formally; then occasionally omitted. Prayer will be restrained before God, and this will soon extend to social and public worship; ordinances will be slighted; the Lord's Supper neglected; love to the brethren will wax cold; attachment to sensual pleasures, and worldly business, will increase; perhaps prejudice, against purity of doctrine and religious principle, will arise in your hearts, and it will finally lead to deliberate and gross sin. Beware of it. Watch unto prayer; for it is not impossible for you to fall into sin—even

the sin of which you think there is the least danger, and against which you have most solemnly resolved, and of which you have most bitterly repented — yea, to fall into it again and again. Remember what Peter did, after saying to our Lord, though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise, also, said all the disciples (Mt. xxvi, 35), and afterwards forsook him and fled. O, how deep will it pierce your heart; how dear will you pay for it; how will it separate between you and your God; what desolation will it spread over your soul; yea, more than all you ever before felt. The agonies of a sinner in the first pangs of his repentance and conversion, are not to be compared with those of the backslider in heart, when he is filled with his own ways. Sin will hide God's face; destroy your comforts; dispel your hopes; cloud your evidences; wound your heart and conscience, and cause darkness on every side; drive away consolation; embitter enjoyments; sharpen afflictions; rejoice enemies, and bring on you numberless

evils. The light of God's countenance expresses the manifestation of his favor, and the hidings of his face is a token of his displeasure. The former is the life of the believer; the latter is as death to him (Ps. iv, 6, 7, 63; Is. lxix, 2; lxiv, 7). Who can live in his cold, or under his frowns? Though now the candle of the Lord shines upon you, yet sin will hide his face, and you may so lose a sense of divine favor, as to question whether or not you have any part or lot with the people of God, and to think that your hopes have been a delusion, and you have nothing to do with the privileges of the saints, and the work of the Holy Spirit, and that those who have never felt any religious impressions at all are happier than yourself. This may be the case for a considerable time; and ordinances may be attended in vain, and God's presence in them sought in vain, and no comfort and satisfaction found any where (Ps. xxii, 2; Job, xxiii, 8, 9); so that all which appeared like religion in your mind may seem "to be melted into grief, or chilled into fear, or

crushed into a deep sense of your own unworthiness; in consequence of which you will not dare lift up your eyes to God, and will be ashamed to come among his people." This has been the case with some eminent Christians, distinguished by what God has done in them and by them. Your distress may arise from bodily disorder or mental depression, from providential bereavement, or, more likely, from some secret sin and idol in your heart, and God is thus intending to awaken and humble you, and cause you to put away the accursed thing, and prepare you for heaven. Then examine yourself, and return to God. If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up; thou shalt put away iniquity from thy tabernacles; for then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God. Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee, and thou shalt pay all thy vows (Job xxii, 23, 26, 27). Return in humility; wait on him, and submit to his discipline. Acknowlege that, for your sins, you deserve all, and more than all

you suffer; deserve that your sun should be clouded; go down at noon, and set in endless night. Stay his time, and bear his indignation, because you have sinned against him, hoping and believing that he will at length return, and have mercy on you. Go on in the way of duty; continue to use the means of grace; go by the footsteps of the flock and you will find him whom your soul loveth, and whose countenance will create a heaven in your soul. Go to his table and if you can not rejoice, go and mourn there—renew your application to the blood of Christ. Apply to him as to a merciful high priest who has a fellow feeling with our infirmities. *Return to God again* after this *apostacy and sin* committed *since* your *vows and engagements* to be the Lord's. Think of all the aggravating circumstances of your sin—your ingratitude and abused mercies, and perhaps of the reproach you have brought on religion. Look on Him whom you have pierced and mourn, and bring your wounds under the droppings of his blood, by which alone they can be

healed. Renew your covenant with God and cry for mercy and grace, and in the strength of it labor to return to him with all your heart. *Delay not.* Do not add sin to sin by delay. Escape for your life; look not behind you; neither stay thou in all the plain—lest thou be consumed, and whilst you linger may God be merciful and assist you to flee and escape from impending ruin. Improve the ordinance of the supper which is calculated to humble and revive you. Repenting sinners are the only persons that have any business there. The best of men come to it as sinners, and as the greatest sinner, come to it in the exercise of faith and repentance, and prostrate yourself before God; and when you have received tokens of pardon, do not forget your sin nor God's mercies, but keep them ever before you to humble and warn you in future. It is in this way that God establishes his covenant—that thou mayest remember and be confounded and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith

the Lord thy God (Ezk. xvi, 63.) *A life of sin is a life of misery* and of *want.* The prodigal began to be in want, and every prodigal child of God will be in want of some blessing, temporal or spiritual—perhaps of one that is of all others most desirable to him. God withholds it for correction, for trial and for leading the wanderer back to himself, the fountain of life and blessedness, and lead him to his father's house, where there is enough and to spare, while he perishes here with hunger. O God, for thy mercies sake and for thy glory bring back this poor wanderer, and suffer him no more to stray from the God of his fathers and his mercies.

Let me *exhort you,* who have *not yet obtained pardon,* or who by sin have *lost the evidence* of it, to *seek it without delay*—with *all* your *heart* and *soul, mind and strength.* Relying on the promises and the strength that is in Christ Jesus, use all diligence and avail yourselves of all lawful means. If you were condemned to prison or to death, would you not use all diligence and means

in your power to obtain release and pardon, and would you not also employ your friends and neighbors to intercede for you? Well, you are condemned to death at the bar of God and conscience, and will you not use the same diligence and employ similar means to save your souls, that are of so much more value than your bodies. Will you not seek the Lord while he may be found, saying take away all iniquity and receive us graciously; pardon mine iniquity for it is great—wash me and I shall be whiter than snow—and give him no rest till he blots out for his own name's sake all your transgressions, and saves you from all your uncleannesses? Will you not employ your friends, and especially the Friend of publicans and sinners to intercede for you? Him the Father heareth always. Use even the same diligence you do to obtain the things of this world, and you will not labor in vain. What is true of wisdom is true of this. If thou seekest for her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then thou shalt then understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God—if

any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him, yet let him ask in faith nothing wavering (Prov. ii, Jas. i). The promise is, seek and ye shall find; seek the Lord and ye shall live—nay more, you are earnestly entreated by the Saviour, who says, I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed, and eye salve that thou mayest see (Rev. iii, 18). The mercies of God, the joys of heaven—the eternal happiness of your soul, all plead with you to seek forgiveness. Do not plead that you have *Abraham* to your father—that you *have pious parents*—that you *have observed the forms of religion*—have *done something* for the cause of Christ, and been zealous for the faith once delivered to the saints—that you have a *fair moral character*—have refrained from *gross sins* and have *felt some warm emotions of piety* in your heart and hence have "got religion." Ishmael and Esau had pious parents, and the rich man in hell cried, father Abraham

have mercy on me (Luke xvi, 24). Many will sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness, (Mt. viii, 11, 12). To many who have eaten and drunk in his presence and in his name have cast out devils and done many wonderful works, Christ will profess in that day, I never knew you. Though you have a fair moral character, yet you have omitted the weightier matters of the law—cast off fear and restrained prayer before God—despised the Saviour and trampled under foot his blood, and been guilty of crimes too numerous to mention. Are you then better than the Scribes and Pharisees who sat in Moses' seat with a fair moral character? Is your conversion any better than that of the stony ground hearers who had warm emotions and received the word gladly, but had no root in themselves and thus withered away? Then dismiss all such vain hopes and pleas, and do not make shipwreck of your souls on these rocks and sands that have been the ruin of many, and the oc-

casion of false peace to them that were near the kingdom of heaven, but not in it. Say not that you have Abraham to your father—but come to God now. Consider the uncertainty of life—the importance of the work to be done in it—the brevity of the time for doing it, and the impossibility of doing it when the day of grace is ended and time is no more. Consider the advantages of early piety, and that one day or one hour spent in the service and enjoyment of God is far better than ages spent in sin and neglect of religion. Perhaps you are now convinced of sin and guilt, and inability to save yourself—convinced that you are ignorant and guilty and polluted and enslaved—that you are wretched and miserable, and poor and blind, and naked, and under this conviction you are resolved to come to God at some *convenient season*; that Jesus may be made of God unto you wisdom, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption—that you may buy of him gold tried in the fire that you may be rich; white raiment that you may be clothed, and eye salve that you may see.

But come *now*. Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation. To-morrow may be too late. It is in another world. The past is gone, the future is uncertain, the present only is ours. Delay is not only dangerous, but it also accumulates the debt of sin. Let not this artifice of Satan be your ruin as it was with Felix, who, as Paul reasoned of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come, trembled and said, go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee (Acts xxiv, 25). Alas, that season never came. We hear no more of him. His convictions wore away and he never sent for Paul, and most probably died in his sins. Awful death! In him is exhibited the case of thousands who say, To-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant, when they have a convenient season. When they have acquired great worldly wealth and honor, and fame, and grown grey in sin too—when their natural strength is gone, and the world, and the pleasures of sin for a season have lost their charms and ceased to gratify, then they will

retire from the world and its follies, and thus enfeebled, devote themselves to the Lord and his service for the remainder of life. Alas, what folly and presumption. Do you think God will accept this halt, and blind and lame sacrifice, and do you not know that life is short and uncertain. "Ah in what perils is vain life engaged! What slight neglects—what trivial faults destroy the hardiest frame! Of toil, of indolence we die; of want, of superfluity! The all-surrounding heavens, the vital air is big with death!" As the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, so are the souls of men snared in an evil time when it falleth suddenly upon them. Boast not thyself of to-morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth—yet it may bring thee to death, and to the house appointed for all living. In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh (Mt. xxiv, 44). Or you may say you will come when you have *reformed* and done *something* that will *recommend* you to God. But on this principle you will never come

Your help is in God. It comes from Zion. O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thy help (Hos. xiii, 9). There is no way of coming to God but through Christ, who is the way and the truth and the life; and your first great business is to believe on Him whom he hath sent, (Jno. xiv, 6; vi, 29). As Paul testified both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts xx, 21), so we testify to you. Commit your soul into his hands to be saved by him in his own way. This is the great act of saving faith, and may you and I know what it means, and be enabled to say, I know whom I have believed, and am pursuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day (2 Tim. i, 12). Come to him now as you are, with all your sins and wants and unworthiness. In him is righteousness and merit, and every thing we need. If you wait till you render yourself worthy you will never come. A patient does not wait till he heals himself before he calls a physician, and why would

you first heal yourself and then call for the Physician of souls. Apply to Christ with a deep abhorrence of your sins, and a firm resolution through grace and dependence on him for acceptance, to forsake all sin. Though, from a sense of sin and guilt and shame and fear, you are unable to speak—go and behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world—go and look on him whom you have pierced and mourn—mourn because that for a *low and sordid gratification* you have killed the Prince of Life, or wounded him afresh. O, which of your sins is so dear that for it you would crucify the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame? Repent of every sin and forsake it; slay it or it will slay you —you must part with it or part with Christ and heaven too. If thy right eye offend thee pluck it out and cast it from you—yield yourself to God, as those that are alive from the dead—go and say I am one of the most sinful and miserable creatures, yet because thou hast said come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you

rest; him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out; behold I come at thy bidding. O help me to come. I believe, help thou mine unbelief. Hold out the golden sceptre to me—enable me to touch it and live. Let the life of my soul be given me at my petition, and of my people at my request (Est. vii, 3,). I have *no equivalent* to give. O have mercy on me, make me thine and make me serve and glorify thee in life and death and eternity. Or you may be saying your *life has been a course of rebellion against God. Nothing has been done rightly from your earliest days till now. Mine iniquities have gone up into heaven.* There *never* was so *great a sinner as I.* I have received so many mercies and advantages, warnings and invitations, and yet my heart is so hard, my nature is so simple—my sins so many and so aggravated *that I dare not hope for mercy.* It is a wonder that I am yet out of hell. I dare not apply to Christ. I can not expect pardon—the promises are not to me. Can I expect that Christ is willing to save me. Must I not lie down in despair, or is there

hope for so guilty a creature? Certainly there is. God who is rich in mercy and ready to forgive, says in me is thy help (Hos. xiii 9). Is my hand shortened at all that it can not redeem (Isa. l, 2). God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and declared that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations (2 Cor. v, 19; Luke xxiv, 47). It is not your legion of sins—your great and aggravated sins, but your unbelief and impenitence that would destroy you. Where sin abounded grace did much more abound—where it had its most unlimited sway and unrestrained triumph, there righteousness reigned to eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord. That will clothe you with the white robes of salvation and glory. Many who are among the best of saints or now in glory, have been in such a case as this, and may God add you to their number. Cast out of his sight, look again towards his holy temple. Your case is not peculiar. If you knew the heart of

others and their sins and difficulties you would find at least some of them whom you suppose to be almost perfect, in no better case than yourself. But if you are the *vilest of the vile*, and your *sins* have gone up to the heavens every day with great aggravations, *they can not exceed* in number and turpitude the *power of God, and the all sufficiency of Christ's blood to save.* Is there any thing too hard for the Lord to do. Does not Christ's blood cleanse from all sin—have not the greatest sinners been pardoned (Gen. xviii, 14; 1 Tim. xv, 10; 1 Jno. vii, 9). Christ is able to save to the uttermost. He has saved the chief of sinners, and never sent any away that came to him for life and salvation. He died to redeem your soul from all sins, and to the long and black catalogue do not add unbelief, the greatest of all, but go to Christ for pardon and purification and eternal life. Believe on him and you shall be saved.

Look to Christ as the only Saviour, and as your Saviour, come to him as a poor, needy and heavy laden sinner, that you may find

rest to your soul. O my soul return to thy quiet rest. In the way of meeting divine favor or justification, all our righteousness is as filthy rags. Then we must come to him, who is the Lord our righteousness, and who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and who is made of God unto us wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. We pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God, and present yourselves a living sacrifice holy, acceptable by Jesus Christ. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance (2 Pt. iii, 9). He is offering you a free and full pardon of all your sins. He is ready to receive you into his family and finally unto heaven. Arise and go to your Father, and say, Father I have sinned against heaven and before thee. I am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants. We beseech you by the mercies of God, by his compassion and goodness, by the name and love of Christ, by his life and death and all the painful and pathetic, and ignominious

and distressing and overwhelming scenes of the cross—by the entreaties of friends and ministers of the gospel—by a respect for the living and by the memory of the dead—by the joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth—by the scenes of the last great day—by the value of your immortal soul—by the happiness of the redeemed in glory, and by the wail of eternal woe in them that perish, to seek forgiveness and acceptance through Jesus Christ. Are you so wedded to the vanities of the world—to a carnal mind—to the object and ruinous service of sin and Satan, or any such thing that you can not forsake all for Christ. Are they dearer to you than the Saviour and salvation by him. O sell all and buy this Pearl of great price. What is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and loose his own soul, or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul (Mt. xvi, 26). Let not the riches, honors and allurements of the world; let not the artifice of Satan and the pleasures of sin for a season; let not the misguided kindness of friends and physicians, who too often

will not permit you to think of these things in sickness, and in view of eternity with all its dread realities—yea let nothing hinder you from seeking pardon through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord and saviour; and may God in his infinite mercy grant you and me and all who call on him in truth, this great and unspeakable blessing, and let us ascribe all the glory and praise to his great and holy name, world without end, Amen.

"How oft alas! this wretched heart
Has wandered from the Lord?
How oft my roving thoughts depart,
Forgetful of his word!
Yet sovereign mercy calls return,
Dear Lord and may I come?
My vile ingratitude I mourn,
O take the wanderer home.

And cans't thou, wilt thou yet forgive,
And bid my crimes remove,
And shall a pardoned rebel live,
To speak thy wondrous love?
Almighty grace, thy healing power,
How, glorious, how divine!
That can to life and bliss restore,
So vile a heart as mine,

Thy pardoning love so free, so sweet,
Dear Saviour I adore.
O keep me at thy sacred feet,
And let me rove no more."

CONCLUSION.

Finally, let every one who has received forgiveness of sin never cease to express, in sweet and triumphant song his gratitude and praise to God for this inconceivably great blessing. To assist you in this exercise, look to what you were: lost, helpless; dead in trespasses and sin; carnal, sold under sin; sold for naught; by nature children of wrath, and heirs of hell, at enmity with God, and exposed to his wrath, which will burn from the lowest hell, against every impenitent sinner. Look at your life when serving divers lusts and pleasures; stained with crime; darkened and embittered by sin; encumbered with cares, and anxieties, and fearful forebodings of the future, and your souls, under a deep sense of the number and aggravations of your sins and abused

mercies, and base ingratitude, driven to the borders of despair. Look at all the ills and pains of life, and the agonies of the last conflict, and look to the urn of everlasting death, with ever-burning sulphur unconsumed. Look at the guilt and pollution of sin; the curse of the law; the tyranny of sin and Satan, and the wrath to come. Look at all these, and ten thousand evils from which you are redeemed, and then consider the means by which this redemption is obtained; redeemed without money; redeemed not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish; redeemed by Jesus Christ, who for this purpose veiled his uncreated glory in our nature, and led a life of poverty, of suffering and sorrow, and died the painful, lingering, accursed, and ignominious death of the cross. Consider his whole life, from the manger to the tomb, and all the painful and overwhelming scenes of that hour when he was to go out of this world to make atonement for sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness. O, look to

God, who, in love to sinners, spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. Look to Jesus, who, in compassion for us guilty creatures, died, that we might live. Look to that grace which has made you differ from those that perish. Look to that love which has followed you through all your wanderings; pitied and pardoned you, and brought you back to the fold of Christ. Look to what you are exalted; to the mansions of glory Christ Jesus has prepared for you; to the throne upon which you will sit and reign with him. Look to your crown of righteousness; to your robes of glory; to your blessed society and holy employments, in the new Jerusalem, enlightened not by the sun or moon, but by the glory of God and of the Lamb. Look to the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne, who will feed you and lead you to fountains of living waters, and to God who shall be with you, and be your God, and wipe away all tears from your eyes, where there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain;

for the former things are passed away.* Look at these and similar things that are calculated to fill your heart with love and gratitude and praise to God, for all his mercies, and lead you to say: God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus; that, in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kind-

* The Christian reader will find his contemplation of heavenly things enlivened, by the perusal of a little work, entitled: Immanuel's Land, or, a Glimpse of the World of Glory, by D. A. Harsha, author of The Love of Christ; Christ, and Him Crucified, &c. "This little work," says an able and pious divine, "is the third in the series, from the same pen, and in the same strain of Scriptural piety. If we mistake not, the author has been trained by the discipline of heaven for the production of such works as these. Early schooled in affliction, and made familiar by experience with the consolations of God, his writings taste of the freshness and simplicity of one who has bathed often in Siloa's fount." — Rev. R. F. Cleveland, of Clinton, N. Y.

ness toward us, through Christ Jesus. Our salvation, from beginning to end, is all of grace; not of works, lest any man should boast; and this calls for gratitude and praise, which every redeemed sinner desires to give to his great and glorious Redeemer. His language is, not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give glory; not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us. I have been a great sinner, but God has been a God of boundless mercy to me, and now my tongue shall never cease to sing his praise, and I call upon all to assist me, in this most delightful exercise, which will be the endless employment of the redeemed in glory. I call upon babes who "found the happy shore they never saw nor sought before;" upon those who by the grace of God have escaped the pollutions of the world, and upon those who are redeemed from the foulest blots of numerous days, and deepest guilt, who sinned in spite of light and love. I call upon all to unite with me in praising

God. O, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases. Bless the Lord, ye his hosts, ye ministers that do his pleasure. Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul (Ps. ciii). Praise the Lord from the heavens, all his angels, all his hosts; sun, moon and stars; ye heaven of heavens, and ye waters that are above the heavens. Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons and all deeps; fire and hail, snow and vapors, stormy wind, fulfilling his word; mountains, and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars; beasts and all cattle, creeping things and flying fowl; kings of the earth, and all people; princes, and all judges of the earth; both young men and maidens, old men and children, praise the Lord for his great love, wherewith he hath loved us; praise him for the gift of his Son, and for redemption through his blood; the forgiveness of sins,

according to the riches of his grace. Herein is love.

"O, love divine! O, mercy infinite!
O love, all height above, all depth below!
Surpassing all knowledge, all desire,
All thought, the Holy one for sinners dies!
The Lord of life for guilty rebels bleeds;
Quenches eternal fires with blood divine.
Abundant mercy! overflowing grace!
———Mysterious love!
God was made flesh, and dwelt with man on earth;
Blood holy, blood divine, for sinners shed!
My asking ends, but makes me wonder more.
Saviour of men! henceforth be thou my theme,
Redeemng love my study, day and night!
When man had fallen, was ruined, helpless, lost,
Messiah, prince of peace, eternal king,
Died, that the dead might live, the lost be saved.
Wonder, oh heavens, and be astonished earth!
Thou ancient, thou forgotten earth; ye worlds admire!
Canst thou believe my song, when thus I sing;
When man had fallen, was ruined, helpless, lost!
Ye choral harps! ye angels that excel
In strength! and, loudest, ye redeemed of men,
To God, to him that sits upon the throne,
On high, and to the Lamb, sing honor;
Sing dominion, glory, blessing sing, and praise."

Dear reader, and fellow sinner, may it be our highest aim to serve and glorify God with our bodies and spirits, which are his. May it be our great privilege to know the blessedness of the man whose sins are freely pardoned, and through the renewing and sanctifying and comforting influences of the Holy Spirit, and the cleansing virtue of the blood of Christ Jesus, and the pardoning mercy of God the Father, may it be our honor and happiness to sing the song of Moses and the Lamb, unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins, in his own blood; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Our God, our father's God, our Creator, Preserver, Redeemer, God over all, and blessed for ever, our undying hope, our all in all, grant us these great but undeserved favors, together with all the blessings of eternal life. Give us thy countenance. Be our shield and exceeding great reward; our souls' eternal portion; guide us through life; support us in death, and afterwards receive us to glory. We humbly ask all in the name, and for the sake of thy Son, our

Saviour, believing that as thou hast delivered him up for us all, thou wilt with him also freely give us all things. And now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, we would ascribe blessing and glory, and wisdom and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, for ever and ever. Amen.

THE END.

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